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LIFE AND TIMES OF CANTOO BABOO
THE BANIAN OF WARREN HASTINGS

VOLUME II

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LIFE AND TIMES OF CANTOO BABOO

(KRISNA KANTA NANDY)

The Banian of Warren Hastings

Period Covered: 1742-1804

VOLUME II

**THE CULMINATION OF THE CAREER OF CANTOO BABOO
(1772-1794)**

AND

**THE LIFE OF MAHARAJA LOKENATH, HIS SON
(1794-1804)**

SOMENDRA CHANDRA NANDY, M.A., Ph.D.

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To

Mother

INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The second and the final volume of the Life and Times of Cantoo Baboo, I am glad, completes the history of a Zemindar family in Bengal in the 18th Century. As described in the introduction of the first, this volume relates to the later part of Kantababu's life concluding with his demise and the death of his only son, ten years later, in 1804. In the two volumes therefore while studying the career of Krisna Kanta Nandy in detail, the emergence of a new socio-economic order can be traced. It will also be noted how the foreign conquerors of the country, who were co-operative with the natives at the beginning slowly but persistently changed their attitude becoming distant and imperial.

The pursuance of the family history into the next century will show the most interesting development in the concourse of Anglo-Indian relations. The Indians absorbing English education, culture and western philosophy tried to come closer to the rulers, who could not fully trust the natives and receded into the shell of administrative seclusion, making the gorge of difference between the nations ever wider. If the conquerors never forgot who they were, they also brought not only the light of the western culture, knowledge and thoughts, but also ideas of industrialisation which shaped the future of the country. The influence on each other changed the character of both the rulers and the ruled to a great extent.

These interesting informations I hope to cater in my next work, "The Descendents of Cantoo Baboo, the history of the Cossimbazar Raj family." There will be a volume each for the nineteenth and the twentieth century, culminating in the abolition of the Zemindary system as enumerated in the Permanent Settlement. Thus the history of a family that was created by Kantababu with the buying of his first property in 1742 will be told, the contribution they made to the country adjudged and their socio-economic progress and transformation analysed.

The present volume however starts with Kantababu as the banian to the Governor General, Warren Hastings in 1772 continuing upto the time of his departure in 1785 and the last nine years. The last chapter, deals with the career of his son Lokenath who was the first Maharaja of the family. Particular attention has been paid to the social condition of the time and the transition of the society.

Repeating my submission of the first volume, I most humbly crave the indulgence of the readers for my lack of expertise in the English language. I am painfully aware that in the hands of a person, with a better pen, the expression could have been improved and the pages reduced. Such a person would have presented a lucid and interesting account, giving the work its deserved honour. I once again plead guilty of being a mere plodder.

I would also apologise for my limited competence to deal with a subject which has not only many facets of history but gives a fair idea of the times and rather a clear picture of the socio-economic situation. Now even with more than one and a half decades of study, I donot feel that I have done full justice to the subject. My only excuse is that having worked hard and sincerely, I am happy to present the result of my endeavours to the discerning and interested readers.

I have the pleasure of pointing out that I presume that the plate numbers 21 and 22 in the first volume are the likeness of Kantababu drawn by Solvyns. The reason for the presumption is that the description of Kantababu resembles the pictures. His dark complexion with large eyes, a broad forehead, and his strong tall body comes out clearly. That he was a devout Vaisnab can be seen in plate 22, when he stood before the painter with his forehead covered in *tilak*, the *Harinam* (Hari's name) beads in his hand and the *konthi* he always wore around his neck. Checking plate 22 with plate 21 I came to the conclusion that they belong to the same person. As Warren Hastings allowed his banian to occupy a chair even in his presence Kantababu was the only banian who was allowed to take a seat in the presence of the Europeans, a particular privilege not allowed to anybody else. I presume therefore that Kantababu would have liked himself to be sketched by Solvyns in a sitting posture. For further clarification I took the opportunity of showing the two pictures to none else than the renowned artist and film director Sri Satyajit Ray. My motive was to find out his opinion regarding the personality of the two persons. To my great surprise and pleasure he agreed that the two pictures were of the one and the same person. I have therefore little doubt in my mind that in plates 21 and 22, the person depicted is no other than Kantababu himself. I am extremely grateful to Sri Satyajit Ray, for spending some of his valuable time with me, discussing the two above noted plates. I have included the picture of the 'Banian' as drawn by Solvyns as the *frontpiece* of this volume.

The only permanent influence of Hastings that can be outwardly found in Kantababu and his direct descendents is what was then known as English style shaving, which simply meant clean shaved. That is how Kantababu and his next three generations faced the world.

Without the encouragement and advise of my late teacher Dr. N. K. Sinha I would have never had the courage to offer this work for publication. Now that both the volumes are published I am reminded of his kind words. My humble acknowledgement and deepest honour, I offer to his memory. Not being able to present these two volumes to him will always remain a void in my life, sorrow as inevitable as the law of the nature.

My grateful and respected thanks are due to Professor P. J. Marshall, Rhodes Professor of the King's College, London who not only read the several drafts of the two volumes giving his suggestions in the matter but also identified the Europeans whose names appear in the book. The Bijaygarh document also was found by him amongst Hasting's papers and a copy sent to me. The chapter on the Europeans of this volume was undertaken at his suggestion. It is impossible to record the thousand ways in which he tried to help me writing this book. He had been my friend, philosopher and guide. Working with him on Kantababu can be considered to be some of my happiest days in life. His kindness and consideration cannot be described in mere words, it was both profuse and unrestricted. He is certainly the mentor of my work. If there be anything useful or worthwhile in the study, the credit will be entirely his, while the shortcomings of the book remain my absolute responsibility. By the 'Foreword' in the first volume he has greatly enhanced the value of my endeavours.

My sincere thanks are also due to Sir Francis Sykes, Baronet, for kindly allowing me to use the picture of his ancestor in the first volume (plate No. 9). As the volume was already printed I could not acknowledge this generous act, which I have the pleasure of doing now. I also recall with satisfaction of having met him in 1978 at the house of his son F. J. B. Sykes in Marlborough, celebrating the re-union of our two families after over 200 years. This in itself can be considered to be an important outcome of the book. I had the honour of accompanying him with the three generations of Sykes to the Basildon house. I am grateful to Mr. and Mrs. F. J. B. Sykes for taking me again to the refurnished Basildon House in 1980 and presenting the first volume of my book. Words fail me to

express my gratitude and delight, for the honour and kindness shown to me during my stay with them in Marlborough.

I take this opportunity to condole the death of the persons who were closely related to the production of my book. The doyen of the Indian historians Dr. R. C. Majumdar who was both my father's and my teacher's teacher expired on 11 February, 1980, at the age of 92. He wrote the Preface of the first volume. I have also lost the principal adviser regarding the publication of the book in Sailendra Nath Guha Ray without whose courage, conviction and goodwill, my work would never have seen the light of the day. He passed away on 31 July, 1980 at the age of 80. The year began by my losing Nirmal Chandra Lahiri, a pioneer in the field of Calendaric and positional astronomy, whom I consulted to find out the exact date on which Kantababu died. He being the most famous astrologer and emphimarist of the city, calculated both the English and Indian dates to within 24 hours, which was later confirmed by the cash books. N. C. Lahiri died on 3 January, 1980 at the age of 73.

F. J. Marsh, the Head of Conservation Section of the India Office Library and Records, London, and one of the leading experts of the world, made the following comment about the paper and ink used in the books of accounts of Cantoo Baboo. He said that freshwater fisherman's rope had been buried in the limepits. The lime broke it down to mush turning into alkaline in the process, then it was made into paper by hand. This paper therefore contains a high percentage of chalk or calcium carbonate. The ink is ivory black which in other words is burnt ivory fixed either by oil of camphor or gum arabic. I thank Mr. Marsh for the interest shown in the manufacturing process of paper and ink in Bengal in the 18th century. As very little work has been done on these lines there is a tremendous scope for addition to knowledge when a new door may be opened to the study of history.

I am indeed grateful to Dr. P. C. Gupta, the editor of the Bengal Past and Present and the ex-Vice Chancellor of Rabindra Bharati and Viswabharati Universities for being one of the few persons encouraging me constantly on my long laborious project.

I also thank Prof. Jagadish Narayan Sarkar, Dr. Sashibhushan Choudhuri, Prof. N. R. Ray, Dr. Barun De, Dr. Nilmani Mukherji,

Dr. Arun Kumar Das Gupta, and many other friends and well wishers who have kindly encouraged me by their interest in my work and by the many suggestions and observations made by them.

I am greatly indebted to Mr. & Mrs. P. K. Rohatgi of London for the friendly concern shown about my humble work. How grateful I am for their celebrating the publication of the first volume in their residence on 1 June, 1978 in a right royal manner. Without their help and co-operation it would not have been possible for me to complete my work in London within a specified time. I thank them for the many kindnesses shown to me.

All students of historical research owe immense debts to the librarians and archivists. I am no exception. Without the help, co-operation, guidance and assistance of the several archives I had the pleasure to work, the book would have never been a reality. My grateful thanks are due to the several Directors, heads of departments, assistants and all the workers in the various institutions, I had the pleasure to work, in the West Bengal State Archives (Calcutta), National Archives (New Delhi), India Office Library & Records (London), the British Museum and Library (London) the National Library (Calcutta) the Victoria Memorial Hall (Calcutta), the Bangiya Sahitya Parisad (Calcutta), the Calcutta High Court Record Room for old Supreme Court Records and the Cossimbazar Raj Record Room (Cossimbazar). I am particularly grateful to the British Museum, India Office Library & Records, and the Victoria Memorial Hall for the maps & illustrations.

I shall be failing in my duty, if I donot acknowledge the services rendered by my office staff as well as by the executives, managers and staff of the various trade and industries that I am connected with, who helped to put the book together by preparing the type scripts, arranging for proof reading, supervising the printing, checking the accounts and putting together the index. I thank them all.

Completing the work which turned out to be of epic proportions I do feel chastened and frightened having been able to complete this monumental work. From the day I took up the project on 29 June, 1967 resources have poured down on me like a miracle of supernatural proportions. Help came from quarters which were beyond my expectation. Whether I have been able to do justice to them, will be for my

readers to judge. While working on the book, I have felt how little we know about the 18th century Bengal and how much more work can be done about this most interesting period of history. The biographies of Gangagovinda Sinha, Goculchandra Ghoshal, the early Tagores and Maharaja Krishnachandra of Nadia are yet to be written. A modern biography on Maharaja Nabakrishna Bahadur can also be undertaken. There is much scope to study the history of the European merchants and the commodities they dealt in, individually or in a collective way, as well as the growth of trade and commerce of the indigenous merchants. While immersed in the study of the life and times of Kantababu, I was constantly ashamed about our lack of knowledge of the social and economic conditions of Bengal in the 18th century. If this work can create enthusiasm amongst scholars and students to take up detailed study of the period, my endeavour will be certainly rewarded.

Let me express my satisfaction to have been able to finish this book which tells us about an eighteenth century Bengali gentleman who carved out a career by his personal endeavour and industry and established a house, where his ideology of hard work and consideration for the fellow worker is still the main motivation. As the first draft of this volume was completed on 3 Jaistha 1382, i.e. 18 May, 1975, that may be considered to be the day when the work on the life and times of Kantababu in two volumes was concluded.

Cossimbazar House
302, Upper Circular Road,
Calcutta-9.

Somendra Chandra Nandy
6, Bhadra, 1388
23, August, 1981
Janmastami.

OPINION ABOUT THE LIFE AND TIMES OF CANTOO BABOO, VOLUME I.

The following review appeared in the well known Journal, Bengal Past and Present, Volume 'XCIX, Part I, No. 168, January to June, 1980, p. 86-88.

Life and times of Cantoo Baboo (Krisna Kanta Nandy) the Banian of Warren Hastings 1742-1804: Vol. I (Early Career of Cantoo Baboo 1742-1772 and his Trade in Salt and Silk). By Somendra Chandra Nandy, pp. xviii+606. Allied Publishers, Bombay, 1978. Rs. 125.00, £8.00, \$16.00.

Judicious use of government records, private collections and secondary works has contributed to Somendra Chandra Nandy's excellent study of Krishna Kanta Nandy (better known as Cantoo Baboo). It is a detailed reconstruction of the Bengali merchant's slow but unmistakable metamorphosis from a small scale operator to the founder of the Kasimbazar Raj within the framework of British colonisation in Bengal. Sri Nandy has entirely broken new ground. As there are no dependable secondary works on the subject of the biography, he had to face the formidable task of presenting 'Cantoo Baboo' as an individual by drawing on his account books, official records and private papers, which as source materials are by no means easy to handle. The author has performed this work with remarkable skill and perceptive understanding which many professional historians can emulate with profit. He has succeeded in making dry and uninviting land and household records preserved in the family muniment-room speak and yield fresh information. He has also thoroughly searched in the West Bengal State Archives, The National Archives of India, the Calcutta High Court record room, the India Office Library and the British Museum. Consequently, the result is a fact-filled and insightful account of the life and activities of one of the key Indian figures during the period of the establishment of British rule in Bengal. It was possible because Sri Nandy took delight in his task, and by executing his labour of love he has placed the students of the history of the period under his debt.

The importance of the banian's role in the early days of British rule has lately been receiving a great deal of attention. He was the

Englishman's or the European's 'liaison officer' with different sectors of the Indian society. His role was comparable to that of a comprador or the Chinese agent who bought and sold on behalf of a foreign establishment. The young inexperienced Englishman with no knowledge of Indian languages had of necessity to depend on his banian. So every European, who was anybody, required the services of a banian and had to engage one. Nominally the banian could be counted as a minor servant, because he was expected to do odd jobs for his employer like attending to his monetary disbursements and managing his household. But it was possible for banians to acquire influence out of all proportion to their humble subordinate station. The banian of an important European was not a negligible person. In fact a clever banian could exploit his relation to his influential employer to his own great advantage. By capitalizing on his master's power and prestige he could acquire incredible wealth for himself. Some of the wellknown banians of the eighteenth century were also the leaders of the Indian community of their time. Some of the Basaks and Seths of Calcutta had acted as banians on different occasions. Gokul Ghosal—a Kulin Brahmin—had worked as the banian of Verelst.

Krishna Kanta Nandy was the banian of Francis Sykes and later of Warren Hastings. He was doubtless a shrewd operator, and he quickly amassed fortune. How he built up his zamindari brick by brick by transferring his business profits to landed property from an early period of his life has been described in this book with ample documentation. No prospective estate on sale failed to attract his notice. He bought portions of the estates of old zamindari houses which were under financial strain. In this way he bought an estate from Rani Bhabani of Natore in 1760. He had invested Rs. 58,000 in land by 1772, and by a clever stroke he acquired the zamindari of Baharband pargana in north-east Bengal—a really juicy plum.

As a banian Krishna Kanta's relations with his influential employers like Hastings, however, were not as simple as one might imagine. To what extent was his personal success determined by his employers' patronage? He was doubtless encouraged by the support given by his masters to diversify his business ventures and take up lucrative enterprises in addition to the family business of silk. But it seems that he started these enterprises on his own steam, and his service with Europeans was just a cover. This final support in the observation of P. J. Marshall in his *East Indian Fortunes: The British in Bengal in the Eighteenth Century* (p 193):

'By 1772 Cantu, like other important banians, was certainly a man of great wealth and influence perfectly capable of acting on his own initiative to further his own interests'. His connection with Hastings was little more than an insurance for what he was doing independently as a revenue farmer or a speculator in salt. He seems to have acquired his revenue farms when neither Sykes nor Hastings was on the Indian scene. On the other hand, as Sri Nandy shows, the service rendered by Krishna Kanta to his employers was infinitely more valuable because the contracts undertaken by him were the basis of the Company's revenue from salt monopoly, land revenue and 'investment' in silk. He seems to have made a solid contribution to the huge fortune made by Sykes as well as to the fortune which Warren Hastings acquired and lost because of his improvidence.

The last chapter which presents Krishna Kanta in his social setting will prove to be an indispensable source of information for sociologists as well as historians of eighteenth century Bengal in the years to come. A reference to the social roots of this man contradicts the usually accepted notion that banians were persons undertaking financial ventures without adequate means, and as such, too fond of displaying their new-gotten wealth. It is also supposed that they were the agents of the introduction of western manners and customs to our society. But here is the case-study of a person whose father was a well-to-do *dadni* merchant dealing in silk, and who was himself a very cautious man if ever there was one. Men in his position had to be careful in every sense. Their earnings to some extent depended on the success of their masters or their houses and they had to cover bad debts like the comprador of China. Frugal and austere in his way of life, Krishna Kanta was not ready to surrender any of the traditional practices of his religion and his caste and adopt the European mode of life. True to his Vaishnava upbringing, he did not deviate from any of its prescriptions in spite of his close contacts with Europeans. It was as though he confined these contacts to a separate plane of existence. The author stresses the simplicity of his personal life which was very remarkable. No portrait of Krishna Kanta giving his likeness is available. One imagines that when not obliged to put on his banians clothes (like the man in plate No. 21 in the book) he must have preferred to be dressed like the 'Man of distinction' (plate No. 22). In spite of his undoubted possessive instincts and acquisitive passion, he had an important social role to play. This has been described by the author with a wealth of valuable details which otherwise would have remained unknown. This

chapter is particularly important because the activities of Krishna Kantā Nandy should be viewed against the background of social customs and morality of the age in which the emergence of men of his type was possible. It is in this respect, as in much else, that Sri Somendra Chandra Nandy has succeeded admirably, and has made a very valuable contribution to the understanding of the Bengali eighteenth century. The maps, illustrations and reproductions of documents given at the end of the volume will amplify the text. The second volume of the work will be eagerly awaited. The present reviewer also hopes that it will be possible for Sri Nandy, with the ample resources at his command, to continue the story of the Kasimbazar family down to the abolition of the zamindari system in 1954.

Nilmani Mukherji
University of Calcutta.

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CHAPTER I

THE GOVERNOR'S BANIAN

Warren Hastings, appointed to succeed Cartier as the Governor of Bengal and the President of Fort William arrived at Calcutta, about the 20 of February 1772, but it was not until 18 April that he started functioning in his office. There can be no doubt that Kantababu started functioning as his banian in course of a few months, if not immediately. Krisnakanta Nandy had been waiting for his master to return and continued to look after Hastings' effects. He maintained by careful supervision a whole stable of horses at Cossimbazar which when Kantababu stayed in Calcutta was left to the care of Kanta's favourite brother Narsing. Later Hastings presented one of the horses to Samuel Middleton. Middleton wrote on 7 October 1773 from Cossimbazar to Hastings, 'Narsing yesterday sent your horses to me and I was as pleased with the appearance of two of them that I did not know which to take'. . . . 'The gray is an excellent road horse and the black will suit well for hunting.'¹ Kantababu also kept in his custody several fire arms, both pistols and culverines as well as matchlocks. A huge hookah which was probably a present from some grandee to Hastings while he was the resident at the Durbar, was left in the safekeeping of his banian. There might have been other materials as well.

There is nothing to prove however that Kantababu knew that Hastings would be coming back as Governor, yet circumstances show that he might not have been unaware of Hastings' presence in Madras. Hastings involved himself in private trading in silk while in Madras and sent several indents to Cossimbazar.² It is possible, therefore that Kantababu was fully aware of Hastings' movements. In fact the renewed interest shown by Kantababu in the silk business from 1771 could be a direct result of this knowledge. In 1771 Kantababu was leading a successful life. His trade and commerce as well as his properties were considerable. He had started Revenue Farming which was yielding

¹BRITISH Museum. Hastings' papers. Add Mss. No. 29134, f 67.

²Proceedings of the Controlling Committee of Commerce of 26th September 1771, p. 247.

good profit. He was not yet considered to be a permanent resident of Calcutta, but his salt profits had enabled him to buy several properties in the city.

Stories circulate freely of how the Governor chose his banian. One story relates how Kantababu saved the life of Hastings from the wrath of the Nawab while in Cossimbazar when Hastings promised to repay him if he ever had the opportunity of doing so. The story continues to relate that as Kantababu was very poor at the time, he fed Hastings his own poor man's dinner which consisted of watered-rice, salt and mud-prawns. Hastings when leaving gave him his ring as a memento. On returning to Calcutta Hastings asked for Kantababu. Several people came to him, all claiming to be the real Kantababu but none could show him the ring. At last the man was found and brought before Hastings who remembered his earlier promise and showered him with properties. Kantababu was bewildered and said that he was not interested in properties but being unemployed asked for a job. Hastings ever grateful to the saviour of his life let him keep the properties but also appointed him as his banian.*

This story of a poor man, who was slightly foolish and uneducated, becoming rich overnight became so popular that it was repeated by many, Beveridge included. None of them cared to know how Kantababu had amassed his wealth. Complete ignorance about the early career of Kantababu resulted in these wild stories. There was little knowledge about the fact that Kantababu had already been the banian of Hastings for nine years (1754-1763) and there was no reason why Hastings would forget his banian in the course of another nine years (1763-1772). The stories were created by people who thought that the prosperity of Kantababu was the result of the patronage of the Governor. This lack of interest in the career of a man who by his intelligence and industry created one of the biggest properties in Bengal, left him as an almost obscure name, not fit for any praise for the last 200 years.

Sir Keith Feiling was probably correct in saying that the familiar face of his old banian 'Cantoo' greeted him when Hastings arrived in Calcutta.³ As an important salt trader and Revenue Farmer, Kantababu

*Another story is even more amusing, which relates how Hastings coming back as the Governor wanted to reward the saviour of his life; so he sent people to all parts of Bengal and Gangagovind succeeded in hunting Kantababu out of a dilapidated little hut, which was the reason of the friendship between Gangagovind and Kantababu.

³Keith Feiling, Warren Hastings, Chapter VIII, p. 80.

was indeed spending time in Calcutta. As the Controlling Committee of Commerce read a recommendation from Cossimbazar Council forwarding proposals for silk contracts in which Lokenath Nandy appeared prominently on 8 February 1772, Kantababu's presence in Calcutta seems to be quite plausible. Even his salt trade was nursing a dispute with the Government about the question of *Serf* and *batta*. It is therefore not at all unlikely that even without any prior knowledge about the arrival of Hastings in Calcutta, Kantababu could have been present in the city.

The first official contact between Hastings and Kantababu is recorded on the 7 August 1772. After taking over the reins of the Government, Hastings set up the Committee of Circuit with Philip Milner Dacres, James Lowrell, John Graham and Samuel Middleton as members. Their purpose was 'to tackle all the main problems of administration in Bengal'. Among the other problems, the inclusion of the silk trade in Cossimbazar, of which the Governor himself had acquired personal experience, can be considered to be significant. This Committee of Circuit concluded its task in nine months, from June 1772 to February 1773. They first proceeded to Krisnagar, where they stayed from 10 to 28 June concluding the settlement of Nadia. Then Cossimbazar was visited. Here they stayed from 7 July to 17 September and concluded the settlement of Rajshahi, Laskarpur, Muhammedshahi, Rokanpur, Jehanguirpur and Chunakhali.⁴ It is quite clear from these papers that if Kantababu was not present in Calcutta at the time of the arrival of Hastings, he certainly met him on 7 July 1772 at Cossimbazar, as a result of which an official assignment of a difficult nature was granted to him. The accounts of the Nawab was always confused and never a clear picture could be formed of them. To get a clear account from the Nawab it was resolved 'that the following persons Cantoo Baboo and Santoram Sing (in all probability Santiram Singh, the son of Ganga Govinda) be appointed to receive the above accounts required from the Nabob and that Jadooram and other officers of the Nizamat be directed to attend the above persons with their accounts as soon as the Nabob shall have complied with the request of the President.'⁵

As the senior auditor of the Nawab's account Kantababu springs into the lime light. On 20 August it was decided that 'The purgunnah of

⁴Proceedings of the Committee of Circuit at Krisnagar and Kasimbazar from 10th June to 17th Sept. 1772, Introduction, para iii and iv.

⁵Proceedings of the Committee of Circuit at Krisnagar & Kasimbazar of 7th August 1772 (Cossimbazar), p. 104.

Bahirbund and the Talooks of Bobunpore, Bulha, Sukhshyer and Palasb (ari) be annexed to the collectorship of Rungpore.* The Revenue farming of Pargana Baharbund was held by Kantababu at the time, in the name of his nephew Baisnabcharan Nandy. Further concessions were made on the same date. It was resolved that 'The following districts and mahals being in the hands of responsible people shall continue to pay their Rent at the Khalsa but subject to the provincial courts of Adawlut established at Moorshedabad.'

<i>District</i>	<i>Person</i>	<i>Mahals</i>
Budderpore	Raja Goordas	Khas Talooks
Hichapore	Nubbokissen	Nabob Gunge
Kantoonagur etc.	Kanto Baboo	Bunderdo
Suchchur and Mahobutpore	Joynarain Ghoshal	Assidnagur
Kolora etc.	Ramchurn Roy	
Hanglow	Santiram Sing	
Duckynarainpore	Hurrykissen Takoor. ⁷	

An earlier decision of the Committee had confirmed the settlement of several farms taken by Kantababu beforehand and though the revenue was refixed to the advantage of the Government, the settlement was not disturbed. The Committee 'Resolved that the following inferior zemindaries and Talookdaries comprehended in the Huzzoor Zeelah be settled on this plan.' The Revenues were fixed as under:—

Cossimpore and 75 other Talooks... Rs. 58,846-11-6-2

Chunacolly 4 parts :—

Chunacolly	Rs. 28294- 4-11-2
Coolberiah	,, 29617-12- 9-1
Cowshypore	,, 11765- 8- 4-2
Wazeerabad etc.	,, 38655- 0- 3-1..Rs. 1,08332-9-8-2
Cuttubpore	,, 9097-11- 8-2
Jehanguirpore	,, 165875-12-17-3
Mancore	,, 13896- 2- 6-1
Hattendah	,, 39852- 1-14-3
Amberabad	,, 33127- 6-14-3

*Ibid. of 20th August 1772, p. 128.

⁷Proceedings of the Committee of Circuit at Krisnagar & Kasimbazar of 20th August 1772, p. 129.

Taherpore	,,	10485- 1-12-3
Mohinpore	,,	5021- 8- 2-3
Jagerketty	,,	5723- 7- 9-2
Kuntoonagur etc. containing :—		
Kuntoonagur	,,	12603-11- 6-1
Purrindarpore	,,	5235-10-19-1
Ragoonautpur	,,	17037- 5- 6-1 ⁹

It will be an interesting study to observe that by refixing the revenue at a higher rate Hastings enhanced the total collection of the Government. He wanted to establish a stable government in India which would be politically viable and economically sound. Even in the case of Kantababu he was not partial in the least. As a direct result of this revenue increase, the jumma of the different districts increased. It will also be observed from the comparative study below that in certain cases he increased the revenue steeply, sometimes covering the original jumma of 1772-73, so that the Farmer had to activate himself into fresh settlements to cover the costs and keep his profits more or less constant.

This comparative study also shows why the collection of the Baharbund Pargana became so important to Kantababu. Of the 13 mahals, Kantababu hardly derived any profit in 1773-74 except from Baharbund Pargana. (See pp. 6, 7 and 8)

Hastings returned to Calcutta in September, 1772 and from that time Kantababu is found to be working as his banian. A Bill of Exchange of £ 50 was given by Warren Hastings to Messrs Waller and Woodman. On the back side there is a line in Kantababu's handwriting, 'The deed, 8 March 1773'.⁹ Similar notes in Kantababu's hand occur in almost all the documents of Hastings. Most of the notes are in Bengali.¹⁰ That Kantababu knew English is demonstrated by the fact that all pay orders, particularly of large sums, were given in writing by Hastings. Francis Sykes, a long time friend of Hastings also knew that 'Cantoo' was acting as the Governor's banian. He wrote on 28 January 1773, 'Cantoo could inform you, particularly how I was situated and therefore I shall certainly expect to hear that an attention has been paid to my character and interest.' Sykes was greatly agitated at the enquiry that was being

⁹Proceedings of the Committee of Circuit at Krisnagar and Kasimbazar of 20th July 1772, p. 53-55.

⁹British Museum. Add Mss No. 29227, f. 154.

¹⁰Ibid., ff 174, 193, 228, 230, 260, 289, 306 etc.

Farms	New Revenue for 1773-74	Collection in 1772-73	Collection in 1773-74	Profit/Loss
Kantanagar etc.	Rs. 34876-11-11-3	Rs. 41066-9-15-1	Rs. 41066-9-15-3	Rs. 6189-14-4-0 Profit
Jehanguirpur	165875-12-17-3	160256-3-11-0	173357-12-17-2	7481-15-19-3 "
Amberabad	33127-6-14-3	36127-6-17-1	36127-6-0-0	2999-15-5-1 "
Huttendah	39852-1-14-3	37496-5-0-0	42102-1-14-3	1250-0-0-0 "
Taherpur	10485-1-12-3	10585-1-12-0	10760-1-12-0	274-15-19-1 "
Jahaniatty	5723-7-9-2	5525-2-10-0	5723-0-0-0	Nil
			Total Rs	18196-13-8-1

From the six mahals Kantababu could derive a profit of Rs 18196-13-8-1
which was off-set by the loss he incurred in the others amounting to Rs. 21523-1-11-3

Chunacolly	Rs.	28294- 4-11-2	Rs.	20512- 5-13-0	Rs.	18711- 0- 0-0	Loss Rs.	9583- 4-11-2
Coolberia	„	29617-12- 9-1	„	21660- 0-17-0	„	22652- 0- 0-0	„	6965-12- 9-1
Cawshypore	„	11765- 8- 4-2	„	9865- 8- 5-0	„	9865- 8- 5-0	„	1899-15-19-2
Mankar	„	13896- 2- 6-1	„	10602-11- 4-0	„	10822- 1-14-3	„	3074- 0-11-2
Total Rs.							21523- 1-11-3	

In the ten mahals discussed above, Kantababu suffered a net loss of Rs. 3326-4-3-2 in the year 1773-74. He however improved the collection of all the mahals subsequently and was able to wipe out the deficit.

Farms	1773-74	1774-75	1775-76	1776-77
Kantanagar	Rs. 41066 9-15-3	Rs. 41066- 9-15-3	Rs. 41066- 9-15-3	Rs. 41066- 7-15-3
Jehanguirpur	173357-12-17-2	175857-12-17-3	178357-12-17-3	180857-12-17-2
Amberabad	36127- 6- 0-0	39027- 6- 0-0	40477- 6- 0-0	42001- 0- 0-0
Huttendah	42102- 1-14-3	43352- 1-14-3	44602- 1-14-3	45812- 1-14-2
Teherpur	10760- 1-12-0	10935- 1-12-0	11110- 1-12-0	11285- 1-12-0
Jeharhutti	5723- 0- 0-0	5815- 0- 0-0	5907- 7- 9-2	6000- 0- 0-0
Chunacolli	18711- 0- 0-0	23447- 3- 6-2	24147- 3- 6-2	24147- 3- 6-2
Coolberia	22652- 0- 0-0	23452- 3- 6-2	24452- 3- 6-2	24452- 3- 6-2
Cawshypore	9865- 8- 5-0	10465- 8- 4-2	11115- 8- 4-2	11765- 8- 4-2
Mankar	10822- 1-14-3	11022- 1-14-3	11222- 1-14-3	11422- 1-14-3

The figures help in understanding that Hastings had no intention to give any concession to his banian; rather he expected that being an efficient man, the collection would increase, which expectation was proved to be correct.

The figures have been taken from the Proceedings of the Foreign Secret Dept. of 22 April 1775 and Proceedings of Home Misl. Vol. 78., p. 491.

conducted against Muhammad Reza Khan and was perturbed justifiably feeling that his name might be drawn in. He continued in the same letter, 'I need say nothing here regarding my situation as Cantoo can tell you how I slaved in every circumstances. I never hidid anything from me, should anything be now on the way relative to M. R. Cawn's enquiry'... etc.¹¹ Sykes makes it clear in the same letter that Kantababu did some odd jobs for him as his banian. Should Reza Khan try to implicate Sykes over those matters the truth should be known to Hastings. 'I yearly sent money to Benarass for the provision of such articles (*diamonds and precious stones*), as he, MRC thought he could but receive for the Pooneah' ... 'But this business did not come in my name, but either in Cantoo's or some other person. And the prices given me for such goods were upon easier terms.'¹²

The year 1773 was lucky for Kantababu. Both his salt and silk business were flourishing while he enjoyed the confidence of the Governor. The new office of the Governor's banian was considerably different from being the banian of Warren Hastings. Here one was flushed with power, being drawn into the innermost core of politics. As a result of which the friends and enemies of the Governor were likewise his own friends and enemies. All this must have created a favourable impression in the mind of the Governor who was found to be entertaining a certain amount of indulgence for his banian. There can be little doubt about the fact that Kantababu wished to gain the Midnapore properties by utilising his proximity with the Governor.

On 11 January 1773 Kantababu became the Security and Collector of 42 Pergannas of Midnapore and Jellasore (though he was quick to discover that all that glittered was not gold and relinquished the 42 Pergannas at the end of the year)¹³ which led to a great controversy in the Bengal Revenue Council in April 1777. In May 1773 Kantababu claimed a security into the balance of Pargana Baharbund held by his nephew Baisnabcharan as farmer, for the breaking of the river; to the amount of S^a Rs. 5958-14-17-0 according to the tenor of his Aumil-nammas.¹⁴ Only four days later, James Irwin, the Collector of Chunacolly

¹¹British Museum. Add Mss. No. 29133, ff. 348-350.

¹²Ibid. (Sykes-Hastings Correspondence), f. 353.

¹³Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 19th and 26th January, p. 121-123 and p. 271-275, Bengal Revenue Consultations, Range 49, Vol. 70 and 71 of 22nd April 1777, pp. 11-30.

¹⁴Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 14th May 1773, p. 717.

wrote to the Governor General in Council that Baisnabcharan Nandy, the Farmer of Chunacolly had demanded a deduction of Malguzarry.¹⁵ The Collectors were conscious about the favourite also. When Kantababu failed to get the farm of Pargana Messideh, T. Pattle the Collector of Laskarpur sent a detailed report to the Fort William explaining the full circumstances under which the farm was given to the highest bidder. He gave the full details of the proposal made by Lokenath Nandy and explained that the proposal of Brajanath Chowdhury, who was given the farm, was much higher.¹⁶ It must go to the credit of Hastings that he never interfered with the district administration or gave any improper advantage to Kantababu. In fact he got so annoyed with his banian by the end of the year that Kantababu had to stop the acquisition of farms and be satisfied with those he had acquired prior to the Governor's return to India.

It can be argued that if Kantababu had not embarrassed the Governor with his futile but continuous appeals throughout 1773, the Governor would not have been strictly neutral during the salt controversies of Kantababu, as a result of which he lost his very lucrative business of manufacturing salt in April, 1774.

In 1773 Kantababu pursued the different Collectors for various advantages. On 9 June Thomas Henchman, Collector of Jehanguirpur forwarded an Arzee of Baisnabcharan Nandy, the farmer of Jehanguirpur and Hatinda, claiming deductions to the amount of Rs. 10,755-12-4 for deficiencies in Revenue. Fort William took a stiff attitude, pointing out that the districts were farmed out on a fixed Jumma which could not be reduced under any circumstances.¹⁷ Quite unaware of the fact that all these petitions were not endearing him to the Governor, Kantababu in the name of his son Lokenath along with two others, namely Gocul Ghoshal and Kashinath Sen moved a petition setting forth the hardship of the salt traders on 29 June, 1773, denying vehemently the supposition, that the salt contracts were obtained by dint of influence.¹⁸ In course of a month the three merchants moved another petition regarding the dispute over 35% *Batta* and 12% *Serf*. They were told very clearly that

¹⁵Ibid. of 4th June 1773, p. 44-51.

¹⁶Ibid., of 11th June 1773, p. 192-205.

¹⁷Ibid., of 15th June 1773. p. 249-254.

¹⁸Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 29th June 1773, p. 487

they would be entitled to only one of the two advantages, on which they were free to choose from.¹⁹

As Kantababu felt difficulty in maintaining his administration over the 42 Parganas and mahals of Midnapore and Jellasore commonly known as 'Cotubpur and other pergunnas and mahals', he wanted to relinquish them. The Government justifiably was not ready to take back the Parganas before the year was over. Kantababu pleaded with Hastings to relieve him through his personal influence. Though Hastings wrote a letter to George Vansittart, he was thoroughly dissatisfied with Kantababu, 'Dear George, Cantoo is desirous to finish your account of Midnapore and other districts in which he is concerned, immediately. He is desirous to pay immediately what is due from him and to relinquish them all but his Talooks. ...For God's sake get the business ended, for I am resolved that he shall either resign these concerns immediately or my service, that I may not be blamed for his omissions.'²⁰ This letter of 9 November 1773 has not been a little misinterpreted. Some scholars misled by the word 'other districts (after Midnapore)' assumed that Hastings wanted Kantababu to relinquish all his farms. The letter of Hastings however means the districts of Jellasore only, which were included in the 42 parganas of Midnapore. Hastings never disputed the right of Kantababu to the farms he had acquired before 1772. It is interesting to find that Hastings made an issue that either Kantababu would relinquish Midnapore or his service. Kantababu gave up the 42 parganas of Midnapore and Jellasore which had a jumma of Rs. 2,66,734-11-3-0 annually. Kantababu kept his service with the Governor by moving a relinquishment petition on 4 January 1774, which allowed him to give up the properties at the end of 1180 (9 April 1774), after paying all his dues on account of his collections in these parganas. The Supreme Council approved, 'Agreed that the security of Cotobpur be allowed to relinquish from the commencement of the present Orissa year 1181 (10 April 1774), that his accounts be adjusted with the Zemindars and that he be credited for the amount he has paid into the Treasury on account of the present year's Revenue and debited for the sums he has collected in the Purgunnahs.'²¹ Samuel Lewis, Collector of Midnapore took charge of the Parganas almost immediately. He wrote

¹⁹Ibid., of 27th July 1773, p. 357-371.

²⁰British Museum. Add Mss. 29134 (Hastings to G. Vansittart), f. 114.

²¹Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 4th January 1774, p. 3891-3893.

on the 21 January 1774, 'I have taken charge of the Pergunnahs for which Kissen Caunt was security and am making out an account of what has been received from thence since the commencement of the present year.'²²

If Kantababu re-established himself into the confidence of Hastings by relinquishing the Midnapore Parganas, the price he paid was very dear indeed. In April 1774 he had to relinquish his salt *khallaries* as well. The Governor could not but have felt that he was responsible for this loss sustained by his banian because of his own policy of neutrality, which he expressed in his letter to the Board of Directors on 22 February 1775.

The three new Councillors namely General Clavering, Col. Monson and Philip Francis arrived from London. The new Councillors, who would be henceforth known as the Majority demonstrated even in their first meeting held on 26 October, 1774, that they were no friends of Warren Hastings. The Governor and Richard Barwell constituted the minority. At first Hastings hoped to pacify the Majority by tolerating them but soon he understood that a deeper game was being played and he mustered his people strongly around him to foil the plans of the Majority. He realised that he needed his friends most at the time, as the main target of the Majority was his own self and not his banian or any other person. He fully understood that if the Majority succeeded in proving a misdeed of Kantababu it would be immediately construed as a misdemeanour of the Governor. His vigorous defence of his banian at the Council meetings and his meticulous collection of proofs to disprove every charge brought by the Majority, proved not only to be the safest policy but the surest way to retain his own position and office. It was only when the Majority could not dent the defence of his banian that they induced Maharaja Nandakumar to bring direct charges against the Governor. Nandakumar the main adviser and assistant to the Majority also lost sight of the weakness he was harbouring in his own bosom, which ultimately proved to be his undoing. It can be conjectured that most of the actions taken by Nandakumar to bring around a complaint against the Governor's banian was known in time so that counter measures could be taken and papers proving the accusations false could be kept ready. Sometimes it is really amazing to find that no sooner were the accusations made, that proofs to the contrary were placed before the Council. Apart from the remarkable power of organisation of the Governor, his banian

²²Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 1st February 1774, p. 4075-4076.

and their friends, another very important and interesting reason can be found which unravelled the plans of Nandakumar. In course of the question and answer before the Board on the day of its historic meeting, on the 13th March 1775, when the Governor and Mr. Barwell left the meeting, Maharaja Nandakumar revealed that Narsing was his servant and could be called as a witness to prove that the Governor's banian asked him for the copy of the letter written by Mani Begum.²³

This is a very important revelation and at once it is possible to see that while Nandakumar was trying to use Narsing as a handle to find the secrets of the Governor and his banian, Narsing however played the double agent remaining faithful to his brother. That was how the Governor was always found in readiness. It is possible that Narsing may also have been the cause of Nandakumar's ultimate downfall. It was a calculated risk taken by Nandakumar, who considered that the most favourite brother of Kantababu would ultimately betray him. Nandakumar fully paid the price of trying to set up a brother against brother for his personal advantage.

It will not be out of place to digress a little to relate the main events of Narsing's career. Nrisingha Nandy, who was six years younger to Kantababu was probably born in 1726. He dropped his middle name 'charan' quite early in his life and came to be known as Narasingha which colloquialised ultimately into Narsing or Nursing.

c. 1726	Birth.
c. 1742	Marriage.
1744	Birth of eldest son Baisnabcharan Nandy, (death 1798).
1745	Birth of youngest son Jugalcharan Nandy, (death 1760).
1754-1764	Asstt. to Kantababu, banian of Warren Hastings.
1765-1768	Asstt. to Kantababu, banian of Francis Sykes.
23 Feb. 1767	Registering a deed of purchase.
1769	Mohrar of Fuccar Coondy's Treasury Daroga.
May 1769	Birth of a daughter.
1770 - 1773	Banian to Roger Barwell, the younger brother of of Richard.

²³Proceedings of the Foreign Secret Dept. of 13th March 1775, Vol. 27, p. 386-395. and (Dupl) Vol. 12, p. 373-383.

1773 - 1775	Served Maharaja Nandakumar.
1775 - 1777	Security to James Irwin.
1778 - 1780	Silk merchant and businessman of repute.
1780 - 1783	Business in semi-precious stones in Jiagunge,
1782 - 1785	Cotton cloth trader of some importance.
1785 - 1787	Turns Exporter, business transaction with Henchman.
1787 - 1790	Banking Business with Birjoo Poundrah, later becoming banian to Henchman and Rider who were engaged in business in Chandernagore. Establishment of an Agency House in Calcutta of which Narsing became banian.
1790 - 1791	Total collapse of the business. Birjoo ruined. The Europeans sail for Europe in different routes. Narsing completely ruined, flies to Brindaban, outside the Company's territory.
1793, 1 May	A witness to the Religious Trust Deed of Kantababu at Benaras.
1795	Buys the 'Pulinkunja' in Brindaban in the name of Maharaja Lokenath.
1798	Returns from Brindaban and the death of his son Dewan Baisnabcharan Nandy.
1799	Death.

In the face of the onslaught of the Majority the misunderstanding between the Governor and his banian which might have started towards the end of 1773 completely vanished. This understanding had already prompted the petition from Lokenath Nandy, 'the son of Kishencunt, the Farmer of the Pergunnah Baharbund, praying to be allowed a grant of the said Pergunnah as his Jaaluh—as his perpetual and hereditary Farm' on 31 May 1774.²⁴ The smooth sailing of the settlement is almost unbelievable. There was unanimous decision of the Board and William Lambert, chief of Dinajpore was written, 'Having thought proper to invest Locknaut Nundee with the Zemindary of Baharbund we direct that you do put him in the possession there', dated 12 July 1774.²⁵ The vakeel of Rani Bhawani objected to the settlement and petitioned for reconsidering the resolution. Here again the

²⁴Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 31 May 1774, p. 409-413.

²⁵Ibid. of 12 July 1774, p. 5500-5503.

unanimous resolution of the Board stuck to the former decision. 'Resolved that the Board do adhere to their determination on this subject passed in the Consultation the 12th Instant'.²⁶ Considering the fact that Kantababu had already been the Farmer of Baharbund for the last five years in the name of Baisnabcharan Nandy, this was undoubtedly the normal decision.

In 1774 Kantababu tried to organise his wholesale trade in salt and largely succeeded. His involvement in the silk trade with the Company in the name of his son Lokenath also became very high, reaching S^d Rs. 11,18,818-11-0 in the year 1774-75. If these were not sufficient signs of Kantababu's rapport with his master, then the appointment of Kantababu's younger brother Goculchandra alias Gorachand into the Ameen Daftar can certainly be taken as such. Hastings did not hesitate to write to Samuel Middleton on 11 April 1774, 'Gorachand Baboo, brother to Cantoo has a claim to the office of Canongoe in the Pergunnahs Baglepoor, Colgong and Chee, with proper vouchers and authority in support of his pretensions.'²⁷ The Ameen Daftar appointment took Gorachand out to North Murshidabad and Bihar from where he gradually attained higher office being able to come back to the Ameen Daftar of Calcutta, three years later.

Kantababu took other steps to satisfy the Governor also. The Company had started public borrowing and paid an interest of 8 percent per annum. This undoubtedly added to the facility of investment by the common people. At the time nothing was more stable or safe than the English Company. Not only the Nawab and his dependents, but also Sujah-ud-dowlah, Amir-ul-Mulk, the Nawab of Ajodhya were pension-holders of the English Company; even the king of Pegu entered the ledger as dependent on the Company. There was also the certainty of getting the interest in time. The third brother of Kantababu, immediately saw the advantage and invested Rs. 26097-1-6 on the 20 December 1771. Krisnakanta followed suit in April 1772 by investing Rs. 6000 only.²⁸ Next year Krisnachandra reduced his investment to Rs. 20744-15-0, while Kantababu maintained his Rs. 6000. Krisnachandra received a total interest of Rs. 1659-9-3 as under :

²⁶Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 29th July 1774, p. 5631-5634.

²⁷British Museum. Add. Mss. 29125 (11th April 1774), f. 282.

²⁸Bengal Journal and Ledgers. Range 175. Vol. 89. Journal of 1771-72, p. 207 & 282.

A/c April 1773 Kissenchund Nundee—

Principal	Interest
Rs. 1647-13-6	Rs. 131- 3-3
" 3000- 0-0	" 240- 3-3
" 3000- 0-0	" 240- 3-3
" 3000- 0-0	" 240- 3-3
" 2097- 1-6	" 167-12-3
" 2000- 0-0	" 160- 0-0
" 3000- 0-0	" 240- 0-0
" 3000- 0-0	" 240- 0-0
Rs. 20,744-15-0*	Rs. 1659- 9-3.*

*Bengal Journal and Ledgers. Range 175. Vol. 91. Journal of 1772-73, p. 304.
 *the addition corrected, which has been given as 21,744-15-0.

Kantababu stuck to his Rs. 6000 and received Rs. 480 as interest of 12 months.³⁰

In the accounts of 1773-74 'Kissenchun Nundee' is found to have invested Rs. 26,744-15-0 receiving an interest of Rs. 2078-15-6.³¹ 'Kistnocaunt' invested Rs. 11,400 in May 1774.³² These borrowings were discontinued in 1775 and the interest was gradually paid up with the principal. Around 1777-78 the public borrowings were again resumed but Kantababu or any other member of his family did not take part in it.

The impression of other people is very well reflected in the letter that Francis Sykes wrote to Hastings from London on the 30th July 1774, 'I hope Cantoo is still with you and behaves well, my respects to him.'³³

1775 was a most crucial year both for the Governor and his banian. The Majority got themselves prepared for a showdown against the Governor General. Nandakumar was continuously active in preparing accusations from various quarters. Kantababu was equally active in getting hold of every information of the conspiracy. On 23 February 1775 George Vansittart wrote, 'A few days ago Roopnarain was sent for by Goring and scolded for not having produced any charge against you. He then gave an account of 2,01,200 Rs. received by you, 1200 recd. by Mr. Graham and 80000 by Bevanny Metre. He was carried with it to the General's. The General threw it down in anger and scolded Roopnarayan for its being so much less than was promised, but he took it up again and pocketed it, and I suppose it will form a part of the Majority's letter to the Court of Directors by these ships. Roopnarayan also told Goring that many other things would have appeared but that Birge Kishour had separated the accounts and made away with some of them. This intelligence is from Contoo.'³⁴ It is evident from this report that the Governor General's party was ready to meet the Majority on equal grounds. Vansittart in a letter to Graham gives the reason of General Clavering's wrath. Barwell was paying court to one of the daughters of the General, but Hastings had no intention of courting the other. This started the dislike of the General against Hastings which has become a matter of great concern. Discussing Goring's greed, Vansittart

³⁰Bengal Journal and Ledgers. Journal of 1773-74, p. 60.

³¹Ibid. p. 225-226 and 255.

³²Ibid. Vol. 95. Journal of 1774-75 A/c No. 115, p. 46 & 48.

³³British Museum, Add. Mss. 29134 (30 July 1774), f. 368.

³⁴British Museum, Add. Mss. 29136 (23 Feb. 1775), f. 94.

suggested that a gift of 5 or 10 thousand rupees may be given to him first and then a complaint lodged at the Supreme Court against him. He informed that Gangagovind's man was established in the Khalsa as the Naib Canongoe to prevent tampering of the papers by the other side. Perbooram's man had been removed. Perbooram was much in the confidence of Col. Monson, and the vacancy filled by Birge Kishour who was under his own protection.³⁵

The storm broke forth on the 11th March 1775 when Nandakumar brought direct charges in the Council against the Governor General, accusing him of taking of money, as a bribe from Mani Begum, the Nawab's guardian. The accusations covered eleven pages enlisting a series of misdemeanours allegedly committed by Hastings. In pages 8 and 9 Nandakumar accuses, 'The Governor Mr. Hastings has given the pergunnah of Baharbund and others in the Zemindary of Rani Bowani to Cantoo, his Banyan. The Ranee has committed no fault and Cantoo has no right by inheritance or any other title to those Pergunnahs. The reason of this gift it remains with the Governor to explain.'³⁶ This complaint almost in identical terms was expressed by Edmund Burke, during the impeachment of Hastings. Philip Francis, the Governor's Councillor who was the main progenitor of this complaint did never inform that he was a party to the unanimous decision taken in the Council. He completely denied of having knowledge of the fact that Baharbund was being held by Kantababu in farm since 1768 and that Rani Bhawani lost the possession of the jaagir as early as 1748 when she refused to increase its rent, since which time Nawab Alivardi and his descendants, which also included Nawab Siraj-ud-dowlah's favourite Raja Mohanlal, enjoyed and kept possession of the property. Ven. W. K. Firminger writes, 'In the year 1775 prior to the execution of Nandakumar, Clavering, Monson and Francis were busily engaged in looking for every possible twig that might form a birch wherewith to chastise the Governor General and his adherants, Lokenath being the son of Hastings' Diwan Kantababu, the matter of the Baharbund Zamindari came to fore.'³⁷

On 13 March 1775 the Majority recorded the evidence of

³⁵British Museum. Add. Mss. 29136 (25 March 1775), f. 128-129.

³⁶Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings. Consultations of 11th March 1775, No. 5, p. 260-272.

³⁷Ven. W. K. Firminger, Ed. Bengal District Records, Rangpur Vol. II, (1920), p. 235-239.

Nandakumar accusing the Governor of various misdemeanours. The Governor and Barwell left the Council in protest against the peculiar proceedings.³⁸ Kantababu was then summoned to appear before the Board but refused stating that, 'It is ordered that I attend the Council. The Governor is present here and I am with him. He prevents me for which reason I cannot go. When the Council is complete if I am summoned I will attend. (signed) Kissen Cantoo Doss'.³⁹ In their meeting of 20 March when both the Governor and Barwell were present, General Clavering formally moved a resolution seconded by Philip Francis that the Governor's Banian was guilty of high contempt to the Supreme Council. Col. Monson also supported the motion. Barwell opposed the motion and Hastings supporting him said, 'Cantoo Baboo as the servant of the Governor is considered universally as the first ('senior' in another copy) native inhabitant of Calcutta. I observe the stress which has been laid upon the approbrious term Banyan applied to him, which is not applicable to him if used in the same sense by which the common brokers in this place are distinguished under that appellation. He is a man of a very creditable family, not a native of Calcutta and has been publicly known many years in this country, in which his character is to this day irreproachable. As my servant he is amenable ('answerable' in another copy) to the Jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Judicature by the express words upon Act of Parliament. He was not subject to the Mayor's Court in which the exercise of the English law was vested, before the institution of the Supreme Court. Any conclusions therefore drawn from the practice of former Government, in which different rights and powers were supposed to be inherent, but have been since expressly abrogated, are fallacious and unwarranted. I repeat that I am against that question.' Somewhat taken aback by the vigorous defence, General Clavering obstinately replied that he was not acquainted with the origin of Kantababu but always understood that he was Mr. Sykes' Banian before he entered the Governor's service. As Kantababu was also a farmer, General Clavering asked the Governor whether he was not amenable to the Board. The Governor replied, 'Amenable to this Board as a Farmer? Most undoubtedly he is, if by amenable is meant accountable for his rent, but it appears then that I have been all along deceived. I thought, he had been called upon for other purposes with which his profession as a Farmer had not even the most distant relation. If I understand the English

³⁸Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings. Consultations of 13th March 1775. Vol. 27, p. 386-395.

³⁹Ibid.

language and the universal principles of Justice, the application of the legal power to illegal purposes, the assertion of right to legal power, for purposes which do not appertain to it, is oppression. If this is the case that the Board mean to make of their authority, which they hold over Farmers of the Public Revenue, I shall protest against it in every instance as tending to reduce those who unfortunately hold those offices, to the last degree of servitude, to discourage men of property and credit from offering themselves as Farmers and thereby essentially to injure Public Revenue.' The defence certainly made the General more angry. He said that the purpose of his motion was to make Cantoo Baboo answerable for the contempt to the Board but in future he would not neglect the other duty also. He said, 'I would take care that he answers for all the Ballances, which may be due from him, for those immense Farms, which he has been suffered to relinquish to the amount of 8 lacs of rupees. It is sufficient for the present that the Board carry into effect what has already been resolved by the Majority of the Board.' The Governor protesting said that he opposed such resolutions and particularly this one, 'understanding it is a declaration to punish Cantoo Baboo in his character of a Farmer, not for his conduct in the discharge of that Trust, but for his conduct in matters which have no relation to it.' After further resolutions by the General and counter resolutions by the Governor, 'The General further moves that an order in the usual form be immediately sent to Cantoo Baboo to attend with directions to the messenger to leave it at his house if he should not find him at home, to direct him to attend on the Council on the First day of its meeting, of which the Secretary will give him previous notice'. This was agreed to by General Clavering, Mr. Barwell and Col. Monson. The Governor General objected. The order was passed as follows :—'Ordered that the Secretary summon Cantoo Baboo immediately.'⁴⁰ A similar summons was sent to Kissen Churn Chatterjee, another servant of Hastings, who also refused to present himself at the Board's dictation.

The Majority had in the meantime passed other orders with the view to harass or if necessary punish Kantababu. 'Ordered that the Secretary do prepare an account of the different Farms, where situated and the annual Jumma of them granted to Cantoo Baboo, the Governor's Banyan or Geura Churn Nundee his brother or his son Lucknaut Nundee at the time or since the settlement of the Committee of Circuit and that he will

⁴⁰Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings, Consultations of 20th March 1775. Vol. 27, p. 426-434. duplicate Vol. 12, p. 403-411.

mention particularly whether he has relinquished any of them, the reasons for it and the Ballances that remain due to the Government from him at the time of his relinquishment, whether those Ballances have yet been paid or written off, and an account also of such Zemindaries as may have been granted to him since the time of Mr. Hastings' accession to the Government and likewise another account of such salt Kallaries as have been Farmed by him.'⁴¹

Everything Kantababu did was questioned. Be it Revenue Farming, salt production or silk trade. The Majority was bent upon teaching him a good lesson. That he had the courage to disregard the Council's summons with the approval of the Governor, was too much for the Majority to tolerate. How could they let a mere servant and a native write that the 'Governor has acquainted him that the Council was broke up and therefore there was no occasion of his going, so that he must on that account decline complying with their orders.' Hastings acquainted the Board saying, 'I inform the Board that there is no occasion to send for Cantoo Baboo and Kishen Chatterjee, as I can give the Board the information required by the General without their attendance. I know they did receive summons sent them by Mr. Sumner in the name of the Board and the answers which were sent were shown to me. I forbade their attendance. I declare it is my belief that it is the intention of the Board to proceed to acts of violence against my servant.'⁴² Even the order of 20 March 1775 could not bring Kantababu to face the Board.

The reaction of the Majority was extremely violent. George Vansittart wrote to Graham from Calcutta on the 25 March 1775, 'The General Consultations of the 11th and 13th March will show you a heap of accusations lodged by Nundcomar against the Governor and will inform you that the Majority have determined to prosecute in the Supreme Court for money he is said to have received from Munny Bhegum. The rest are calumnies. What think you of the General's proposing to put Cantoo in the stocks for refusing to give evidence before the Council concerning (the) charges which are to be tried in the Supreme Court of Judicature. ...The Rani got her Khellat from the Majority. The Burdwan group was clearly told to stick around the Majority whose only idea at this stage, (March 1775), was to gather together enough evidence of misdemeanour for the dismissal of Hastings. To procure

⁴¹Revenue Dept.. Proceedings of 14th March 1775, p. 1002-1004.

⁴²Ibid.

information of presents having been received by any of the members of the late Council particularly the Governor or you or Barwell or me is now the great object of the Majority's labour for the public good. Monson, Goring and Nundcomar are the acting persons in this pursuit. Nunddual, the vakeel of the Ranny of Radshay, who has been sometime in Calcutta complaining against Dullol Roy and endeavouring to recover the Farm of that district was expressly told by Monson himself, as he and Gunga Govind have assured me, that he shall not obtain his wishes unless he would lodge accusations. On the other hand, he and Ramkissen, the adopted son, have been assured by Nundcomar that if they will lodge accusation, they shall obtain complete success.

'The Nuddea Zemindar has also been required to lodge accusations. Nundcomar has met with Employers who allow full scope to his Genius. He sent for all the vakeels and every body else whom he can get to come near him and distributed threats and promises all day long.'⁴³

Vansittart at this time turned himself into the chief of the intelligence department and kept track of all movements that were being perpetrated against the Governor. Every information of Vansittart proved to be correct. He rightly assumed that Nandakumar was the king-pin in these mechanisations. The complaints from the different quarters arrived according to expectation. The accusations of the Rani of Burdwan arrived on the 10 March. She accused that she had to bribe several of the Governor's friends. This case has become famous as the 'Khansamoney Affair'. The Rani's report accused the following :—

No.1	Account of Embezzlement of Mr. Graham during the time he was the Chief of Burdwan Province	—Rs. 2,02,485-0-0
No.2.	Account of the money unjustly taken by Mr. Graham	,, 36,065-0-0
No.3.	Memorandum of the money expended from the Consummah's Cash, found out as per that account said to be received by Governor Hastings and the Gentlemen of the Council	— ,, 1,50,000-0-0
No.4.	Account of the monies paid to Kantoo Baboo the Banyan of Governor Hastings	— ,, 5,500-0-0
	Total	,, 3,94,050-0-0

⁴³British Museum. Add. Mss. 29136, f. 130-133.

Details of No. 4

Account of the money paid by Birge Kissore Roy out
of the Consummaney's cash to Cantoo Baboo, and
his mate, banian of Governor Hastings.

Paid to Cantoo Baboo

—Rs. 5000-0-0

Paid to his mate Kissonchurn Chatterjeeh

— „ 500-0-0

Rs. 5500-0-0⁴⁴

The other complaints were not slow in coming. On 31 August 1775 one Meer Joynal Abedin formally complained that Khan Jahan Khan the Faouzdar of Hoogly had obtained the services of the Hon'ble Company by bribing the Governor as a result of which, his annual salary was increased to Rs. 72000/- which was Rs. 40000/- higher than that enjoyed by the former Phoujdar. The reason for this phenomenal increase was because the Phoujdar agreed to pay to Governor Hastings annually Rs. 36000/- and to his Banian Cantoo Baboo Rs. 2000 per year. Jaynal Abcdin requests the Board, 'therefore you will be pleased to take the 40000 Rs. in the Honble Company Treasury and will put your servant (meaning himself) in the same employment by allowing 32000 Rs. by which encouragement, your petitioner will contrive to their many other methods for the benifit of the Company for which your petitioner humbly craves your protection and redress.' With the petition a letter was produced, alleged to be written by the Foujdar Jahan Khan to some Manickchand and Fakirchand as the proof of the undeniable guilt of the Governor and his banian. The translation of the letter reads thus— 'After the usual compliments Meer Kudrut Ally informs me that you are arriving at Hougly, I write you now as Dewan Kishen Cunt has been applying to me for the money which you know of. I desire you will immediately remit down the 3000 Rs. in the hands of the Cash keeper on account of the month of Aswin as also the amount of my establishment being 6000 Rs. from the month of Cautick and the 4000 Rs. you told me you could procure from the Cash keeper, altogether 13000 Rs. without delay.' To the letter the Foujdar added in his own hand a requisition for Rs. 4000 for his own personal expenses. The Foujdar's Vakeel was already procured by the Majority who being examined replied that the Dewan Kishen Cunt of the letter was none other than the Governor's Banian Cantoo Baboo. Jainal Abedin the complainant being further questioned stated that though he did not know Persian he knew the

⁴⁴Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 10th March 1775. p. 249 & 262.

contents of the letter and also that Rs. 4000/- out of Rs. 32000/- was taken by Cantoo Baboo while the rest went to the Governor. No proof other than verbal knowledge was adduced.⁴⁵

Later this charge formed a part of the charges levied against Hastings during his Impeachment, without any further addition of evidence. On the same day, 31 March 1775 it was reported to the Board that Lokenath Nandy, the son of Cantoo Baboo in whose favour an Aumilnama was issued for the possession of the Zemindary of Baharbund was a youth of 11 years.⁴⁶ The grant was promptly ordered to be kept in abeyance by the Majority.

The next day the Council recorded the complaint in the form of a petition from 'Raja Ramkissen of Radshay'. The 1st April 1775 turned out to be a rather dull day for the several banians who were mentioned in the petition as having accepted gratifications in various forms from the 'Raja of Radshay'.⁴⁷

Ramkrishna, the adopted son of Rani Bhawani of Rajshahi, whom she wanted to be considered as the legitimate heir, considered the Governor General to be against his succession and was naturally dependent on the Majority. The petition of 'Raja Ramkissen of Radshy' of 1 April 1775 was witnessed by Ramchund Sen and Kauzi Ally Khan under the latter's seal. Along with the petition he submitted an account. "Translations of papers 1 and 2. Particulars of money extorted from the Pergannah Rajisey by the following persons from Bengal year 1179 to Bengal year 1181.

Received by Cantoo Baboo			
„ Ready Money	Rs. 1,25000-0-0		
„ From Ezarah or Farm Rent	„ 2,56140-9-1	Rs.	381141- 9-1
„ by Santiram Singh Ready Money	„ 2,00000-0-0		
„ From Ezarah or Farm Rent	„ 81232-6-2	„	281231- 6-2
„ by Bhabani Churn Mitter			
„ Ready Money		„	115000- 0-0
„ Raja Rajballav from 1174 to 1181		„	223500- 0-0
„ From Ezarah or Farm Rent.			
„ Delale Roy and Porun Bose			
„ From Ezarah or Farm Rent		„	519296-14-6
		„	15,20169-13-9

⁴⁵L.O.R. Bengal Revenue Consultations, Governor General in Council, Proceedings of 31st March 1775. Range 49. Vol. 51, p. 1338-1341 and p. 1343-1345.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 1342-1343.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 1404-1406.

George Vansittart's reactions are extremely illuminating. As a contemporary he was in a better situation to assess the accusations. His views are known in the letter he wrote to Graham from Calcutta on 10 April 1775. 'On the 31st of March the new talks produced at the Council an information from Zein-ul-abdeen, the farmer of one of the Divisions of Tumlook that the Foujdar of Hougly holds his office in virtue of an agreement to pay 36000 Rs. a year to Mr Hastings and 2000 Rs. to Cantoo, and on the 1st of this month a petition was produced from Ramkissen representing that the English Gentlemen had embezzled a great deal of money from Radshay in the names of their Banian. This petition was accompanied by a separate list amounting to 15 lacks of Rupees taken by Cantoo, Santyram, Raja bullub and Dullal Roy^(x) about 5 lacks in ready money and 10 by the profits of the farms they hold. I know not if the new Gentlemen expect to prove these accusations or if they are produced only in hopes of raising clamour. I suppose the influence thrown into the hands of Nundcomar and the distribution of promises, threats, rewards and punishments will procure many more accusations. In the meantime Nundcomar looks out for himself and for some of his employers. Birge Kishour tells me that Ram Cunt on the part of the Burdwan Ranny has actually paid him 3200 Gold Mohurs* through the hands of Cheitun-naut and Jaideb Choby, two of his retained swearers, and Gourharry Sircar. Similar information has been given me by Ramlochun and Santyram and has also been written by Juggul Narrayan Meter from Burdwan' 'I myself believe it to be well founded. A report too is whispered about Neelmunny, Mr. Francis' banian having gone up to Hooghly a few days ago and brought down with him a lack of Rs.' 'Juggutchund tells me that Nundcomar has commenced negotiations with the Brothers of Asoph-ul-Dowla and sent for their vakeels.'⁴⁸

According to Vansittart all the accusations that were read before the Council were engineered. Indeed the timing and the wording does not leave any doubt that the main purpose of the complainants were to harass the Governor and to put enough material into the hands of the Majority that they could write to the Board of Directors about the misdemeanours of the Governor so that they would be forced to recall him or to ask for his resignation as an alternative to dismissal. The plan was very clever

(X) He missed the name of Bowanichurn Mitter.

* 3200 × 16—S^a Rs. 51,200.

⁴⁸British Museum. Add. Mss. 29136. (10 April 1775), f. 138-139.

indeed and typically Indian in character; for this reason, one is tempted to give Maharaja Nandakumar the parentage for such a well-laid scheme. The plan would have been a complete success in Mughal administration. Nawab Mirkasim had put many aristocrats to death or confiscated their properties for such alleged misdeeds. Nandakumar being securely embedded into the Mughal way of thinking followed their patterned behaviour. Had there not been the Majority, biassed against every move of Hastings, with the blinding greed for his office, none of the accusations were within the least degree of plausibility. Apart from the administrative disadvantage, human nature precludes a person from taking bribe or gratification or present from one he considers his enemy. It will therefore be necessary to examine each case according to its own merits.

(A): The charge by the Ranny of Burdwan was that 'Cantoo Baboc' had taken a sum of Rs. 5000 from the Khansama's cash which is better known to posterity by the curious name of Consahmoney. It is well known that Hastings refused to give a Khelat or recognition of office to the Rani of Burdwan. The anger of the Rani is clearly expressed by making Graham, the chief of the Province of Burdwan, as the main culprit, giving the Governor a second place along with his Council. That the Rani did not have really any ill feeling towards Kantababu is proved by the fact that he has been put down for Rs. 5000 only. If the Governor received so much it was in the fitness of things that his banian and his assistant received some amount of the loot. This was merely an expression of gratitude to the Majority who had stood on their brute-force to grant her the Khelat. Vansittart knew of this movement from Kantababu as early as 28 February 1775. No proof was presented to verify the truth of the accusations, yet that did not prevent the Majority to write in the separate minute they sent to the Board of Directors ten months later, 'to say nothing of the large sums standing in his name in the accounts of money received from the Rannies of Rajshahy and Burdwan, which have either been proved by the production of the original papers at the Board or by witnesses upon oath.'⁴⁹ So far as this case was concerned the sum of money involved was not large, but the original paper was never produced, as the accusation was in the form of a petition to the Supreme Board, nor was the accusation proved in any other manner. The

⁴⁹G. W. Forrest Ed., *The Majority Minutes, Secret Dept. No. 5, Proceedings of the Council of 25th January 1776. Selections from the letters, despatches & other State papers* (1890) p. 477.

insinuation that the minute suggested was no doubt at the bottom of bringing such irresponsible charges.

(B). The charge of bribery brought against Hastings and Kantababu by Jainal Abedin Khan was even more improbable. The case is a curious one. It has been said that the post of the Foujdar of Hoogly carried a salary of Rs. 32000 per year. Hastings, it was alleged, increased the salary to Rs. 72000 on the condition that out of the extra Rs. 40000 per annum provided, he would be annually paid Rs. 36000 and his banian Rs. 2000 leaving the extra Rs. 2000 for the Foujdar himself. The whole allegation was based on a letter supposed to have been written by the Foujdar himself to a couple of Hindu merchants. The letter is obscure to say the least. The only line that has the reference to the Governor's banian runs thus :—"I write to you now as Dewan Kishen Cunt has been applying to me for the money which you know of." Then he puts down his various requirements of money. The Foujdar's vakeel said that 'the Dewan Kishen Cunt of the letter was none other than the Governor's Banian.' There is nothing in the letter that even remotely supports the accusations. The vakeel never confirmed that even the facts stated in Jahan Khan's letter were true or that Kantababu had ever been to see the Foujdar as has been alleged in the letter. Moreover, there is nothing about the alleged settlement in the said letter. It has nowhere been clarified what money Dewan Kishen Cunt had been applying for? Or whether Jahan Khan himself was taking advantage of the name of Kantababu by using the epithet Dewan, so that there remained no doubt about his identity to the Hindu merchants from whom he may have been squeezing out money. Incidentally this is the first evidence of Kantababu being officially termed as 'Dewan Kishen Cunt'.

The other letter was from the complainant Jainal Abedin who in spite of the fact that he did not know Persian, knew of the settlement that had been planned in the letter of Jahan Khan. Had he known Persian he could not have alleged such ephemeral charges which did not exist in the letter. No other proof was presented. The Foujdar who wrote the letter was never asked to appear before the Board and to clarify the meaning of the supposedly obnoxious sentence. The case rested on the 2nd letter, that of the complainant in which he has made the allegations and when questioned later confirmed it with a slight variation. In the complaint he wrote that Hastings would get Rs. 36000 and Kantababu Rs. 2000 per annum, leaving an extra income of Rs. 2000 to the Foujdar which could

be proved to be his part of the gain besides the office of Foujdarship. In his evidence he gave Rs. 4000 to Kantababu and only Rs. 28000 to the Governor leaving a profit of Rs. 4000 to the Foujdar and consequently a better motive to bribe the Governor. It is on these two letters, one from the complainant Jainal Abedin and the other alleged to be written by the Foujdar Khan Jahan Khan, though never proved, had the Majority rested their case. The downright lying that the Majority resorts to, proves that their plaint was very shallow indeed.

Instead of a legal hyperbole, the Majority resorted to administrative misconstruction and wrote in the paragraph 12 of their charges, 'In stating the evidence brought before the Board on his (Hastings) receiving a moiety of the late Foujdar of Hougly's salary, he takes no notice of the two letters from the Foujdar himself, by which the charge is supported.' Not content with one lie the Majority produces another, 'Without these letters, the authority of which was not disputed by the Foujdar, we should have given but little credit to the evidence of the person who produced them.'⁵⁰ In fact the Foujdar refused to appear before the Council and for this offence was dismissed from office by the Majority who then appointed another Foujdar. During the Impeachment in 1786 Hastings said that, 'the charge carried falsity on the very face of it', and added, 'I solemnly declare, that as far as relates to myself, it is wholly false and groundless; and I believe it to be false as it relates to my banyan.'⁵¹

It is an interesting phenomenon of history that the envious petition of Jainal Abedin who wanted to discredit his rival by ingratiating himself with the new Councillors, could travel so far and become a part of the charges in the Impeachment of Hastings. The baselessness of the charges are evident from the self contradictory nature of the statement, which has been recorded in the proceedings. First he gave Rs. 2000/- each to Kantababu and Jahan Khan and Rs. 36000/- to Hastings but later perhaps felt that the sum was too little for Jahan Khan to take such a risk, so he gave Rs. 28000/- to the Governor and Rs. 4000/- each to the Banian and the Foujdar.

⁵⁰G. W. Forrest, The Majority Minutes, Secret Dept. No. 5, Proceedings of the Council of 25th January 1776. Selections from the letters, despatches & other State papers, p. 477-478.

⁵¹House of Commons Journals, Vol. XLI 709, as reported in the Impeachment of Warren Hastings, P. J. Marshall, p. 144.

(C) The third and the last charge was brought by Raja Ramkrishna of Nator. This was by far the most serious charge involving very large amount of money and several Banians. Curiously though, all the Banians involved, were related to the Gentlemen who were considered to be on the opposite side of the Majority. Out of the total of Rs. 15,20,169-13-8, Kantababu was accused of taking Rs. 3,81,141-9-1 which was roughly 20% of the involvement. Before dealing with the charge, it will be necessary to study the motive of the Rajshahi Zemindar and also to explain the mismanagement which was eating away the vitals of the once flourishing Estate.⁵²

Some scholars have held Hastings responsible for the downfall of Rani Bhawani, considering that the enhancement of Revenue as finalised by the Committee of Circuit in 1772-73 had been very high. There can be little doubt that the Revenue enhancements were pushed stiffly upwards as has been discussed in detail in regard to the farms of Kantababu. In spite of this rise in the revenue, Kantababu rose to the occasion and by his organising efficiency covered the deficit, by increasing land settlement. The Rani however could seldom effect any improvement. In fact with the retirement of her efficient Dewan Dayaram Roy, she did not have anybody efficient enough to organise a careful settlement operation. Moreover since the death of Raja Ramjivan, the father-in-law of Rani Bhawani, the Zemindary of Rajshahi was being torn by family feud. Debiprosad the son of Bisnuram, the youngest brother of Raja Ramjivan considered himself as the legitimate heir, secured a Khelat from Nawab Alivardi Khan and ousted Rani Bhawani and her husband Raja Ramkanta, who was the adopted son of Ramjivan, from the Zemindary of Nator. After four months of Durbar diplomacy with the help of Dewan Dayaram Roy, Raja Ramkanta was reinstated in 1741. On his death in 1751 trouble started again and Gouriprasad, son of Debiprosad claimed succession. Every time the claimants bided against each other, raising the quantum of land Revenue, till it became sky high. The Estate suffered very much and Rani Bhawani who was recognised as the successor on the death of her husband was forced to sell her properties even as early as 1759. In fact the regularity of her selling soon reduced

⁵²S. C. Mandy, 'Rani Bhawani of Nator.' *Bengal Past & Present*, Jan.-Apr. 1972
Also see *Life & Times of Cantoobaboo*, Vol. I.

the income of the property so much that it became difficult for her even to pay the Revenue fully in time.⁵³

The Rani's appeal for succour flowed regularly. She wrote to Nawab Mir Kasim explaining the nonpayment of Revenue and also to Batson, the chief of the Factory at Cossimbazar expressing her inability to pay the 'Company's money in 1761.'⁵⁴ Even at the end of 1766 the affairs of the Rani was as muddled as ever. Governor Verelst wrote to Muhammad Reza Khan to take the necessary steps.⁵⁵ The Rani however could do nothing but sell her properties regularly.

Rani Bhawani in 1770 was indeed a sorry figure. Her petitions for time to pay the stipulated revenue were both regular and pathetic. The Revenue Department records clearly establish that the financial condition of the Rani was steadily deteriorating. The situation became so bad that the Company finally decided in August 1774 to pay her an annual allowance of Rs. 2½ lacks and take over her collections. She was also asked to stay either in Benaras or at Baranagore in Murshidabad but not in Nator, the seat of the Rajshahi Zemindari.⁵⁶

Apart from the difficult financial situation the Rani faced the trouble of succession again. She had adopted Ramkrisna as her son and wanted him to succeed her to the estate. Gouriprasad, who now styled himself as Maharaja saw Hastings, explaining that Ramkrisna was an impostor and had no claim to the property. He pointed out that the adopted son Ramkrisna was in fact the son of the daughter of Kaliprosad, the only son of Ramjivan who pre-deceased his father and had therefore no claim to the property. The Rani's adoption of son was merely a ruse to deprive him of his legitimate succession.⁵⁷ Hastings however did not take any decision but allowed Gouriprasad an allowance of Rs. 500. This greatly

⁵³(a) Calcutta Review 1873. Vol. 56. The Rajas of Rajshahi (Territorial Aristocracy of Bengal) (b) Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 7th June 1774. (c) Cantoo Baboo I, op Cit.

⁵⁴Persian Correspondence as preserved in the National Archives, New Delhi, Vol. I. Letter Nos. 1164, 1165, 1179, and 1194.

⁵⁵Ibid. Letter No. 2774.

⁵⁶Proceedings of the Controlling Council of Revenue at Murshidabad of 11th May, 1771, 14th December 1771, 23rd December 1771 and 8th August 1774.

And Proceedings of the Revenue Board Consisting of the Whole Council, of 18th January, 29th March, 29th April and 9th August 1774.

⁵⁷Revenue Department Proceedings of 18th April 1787 and 3rd April 1788, p. 1911-1929 & p. 23.

alarmed Rani Bhawani who felt certain that her adopted son Ramkrishna might be deprived from succession.

If the complaint of Raja Ramkrishna is read against this background, it is easy to conclude that his apprehension of the loss of property forced him to take such a decision. He must have felt certain that with the patronage of the Majority through Nandakumar he would not have any difficulty in securing the Khelat. The precedent of the Rani of Burdwan was a glaring example, not to be forgotten for a moment.

Ramkrishna, who had never been either efficient or intelligent, overplayed his cards rather foolishly. It was this foolishness again which disintegrated his property in the later years. At the time of the death of Rani Bhawani on 16th September 1802,* he had relegated the premier Zemindary of Bengal with an income of 62 lacks per annum to a second grade estate having an income barely of 20 lakhs. The incongruity of his allegations can be laid bare by a cursory glance at his financial situation only a few months earlier. A person who had been a constant defaulter of Revenue throughout, for many years, was either lying all the time when he pleaded about lack of cash for Revenue default, otherwise he really did not have the money to pay the Revenue and as such was not in a position to dole out so much money to bribe the banians as alleged by him, which would reduce his complaints to a tissue of lies and mis-statements.

Barwell, the Collector of Dacca reported on 16th March 1774 that he was forced to complain against Raja Ramkissen, the adopted son of the Rany of Radshy, for nonpayment of the Revenue of Nurrullapore. Mr. Middleton's order was completely disregarded. Officers of the Rani replied when called for an explanation that they had no orders from their superiors. Barwell comments that this behaviour proceeds from an enmity and ill disposition to the present Government. Rs. 1,34,318-11-17-2 was outstanding on the Nurrullahpore account in 1180.⁵⁸ A month later Middleton's letters of 28th and 31st March were replied to by the Board. 'The Ranny (Bhowani) has been guilty of such glaring breach of Engagement with Government that we do not approve of her continuing in the

* IOR. Bengal Board of Revenue Consultations of 17th September 1802, Nator No. 50.

⁵⁸Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the Whole Council of 16th March 1774, p. 119-121.

nominal trust either as Farmer or Zemindar.’⁵⁹ The Arzee of the Rani was read on the 9th August 1774, ‘Agreeable to the Orders from Calcutta out of 2 lakh of Rupees claimed as deductions one lakh on account the *russud* is not admitted on this occasion. I must beg leave to represent that I have now to pay down 4 lakhs of Rupees, altogether six lakhs twenty thousand Rs. and no assets remaining with me. I have pledged my *Mushahara* and sold my goods to pay these four lacks of Rupees and in future for three years what with having to pay 2 lakhs of Rupees more and interest to merchants.’ The Rani petitioned, ‘In this situation I see no prospect of complying with the demand upon me on accounts of the *russud* and must hope for consideration and charity of the *Huzzoor*. Dwelling thus on the circumstances of my own distress may be disrespectful but the truth and sincerity I have used will fully appear when the *Moffussil* papers undergo your inspection. I remain in hopes of your generosity and kindness.’⁶⁰ This is not the letter of a person whose adopted son claimed only eight months later that he had paid over Rs. 15 lakhs only to the banians of the European gentlemen and Raja Rajballav. Probably the intention was not to specify the allegations with proofs but to carry on a whispering campaign which might prove to be even more damaging than an open investigation. Indeed it is curious to find that the charges were never pursued. The Rani was restored to the Zemindari and the adopted son was recognised as her successor. As the Hindu law of the Bengal school did not in any way approve the succession, Rani Bhawani got the approval of the Benaras pundits who were paid an allowance of Rs. 40000/- per annum to approve of the succession. Benaram Pundit became her agent in Benaras. Thus the Bengal school of law givers who were stationed generally at Nabadwip under the patronage of Raja Krisnachandra Roy of Nadia, started to lose their importance to the Pundits of Benaras. Nabadwip itself soon lost its importance and was depopulated, the Brahmin pundits found new patrons in the fast rising newly rich who were situated in and around Calcutta. The Raja of Nadia did not consider this to be a friendly act of the Council and stayed away from the power struggle of this period.

It can therefore be concluded that neither of the three charges brought against Kantababu were either substantial or had any basis or proof. The concern of Sykes who came to know of the events by reading

⁵⁹Ibid. of 5th April 1774, p. 349-350.

⁶⁰Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the Whole Council of 9th August 1774, p. 5765-5767.

the Proceedings of the Board that were made available to him, a year later, is extremely revealing. Sykes wrote on 30 May 1776, 'Poor Cantoo will be involved with a set of people who will injure a very deserving man.'⁶¹ In a private letter to Hastings, this remark about his ex-banian (1765-1769) of only four years gives an idea about the esteem in which Sykes held him.

The Majority however continued to pursue their course of action. On 11 April 1775 they again discussed the Baharbund affairs, Clavering taking the fullest advantage of the difference in the statements of Hastings and his banian. Hastings stated that the Zemindari belonged really to Kantababu, as there was prevalent in Bengal the custom of father's taking out farms in the names of their minor sons. Kantababu on the contrary stated that the farm really belonged to his son and that if the youth died the Zemindary would lapse with the Government.⁶² The Majority also found that Kantababu was enjoying the annual amount of 13 lacks of Rupees in contravention of the Public Regulations of the Committee of Circuit. They also raised the incident of the Phoujdar of Hoogly and commented that if the matter was raised in the Court of Justice there would not be a shadow of doubt left as to the guilt of the Governor and his banian.⁶³ In fact as Vansittart wrote secretly to Graham that the Majority had considered of convicting the Governor and his banian in a court of law, but probably the lack of proof and witnesses cooled them down.

The Proceedings of the 14 April 1775 once again took up the Farms of Kanta. The Governor General had rightly commented that the Farms held by Kantababu were taken without his knowledge. He had advised however the relinquishment of some of them, thinking that the engagements might be beyond his ability. The Majority also wanted to know about the trading contracts entered by Kantababu with the Company and wrote to the Board of Trade to send out a full detail.⁶⁴

Kantababu had already relinquished his salt Khallaries and had no contract with the Company regarding salt. This however did not satisfy the Majority who proceeded to find a '*benamdar*' of Kantababu almost

⁶¹British Museum. Add. Mss. 29137 (Sykes to Hastings, 30 May 1776), f. 204.

⁶²Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings of 11th April 1775, p. 1271-1278.

⁶³Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings of 11th April 1775, p. 1271-1278.

⁶⁴Revenue Department Proceedings of 14th April 1775, p. 1599-1602.

in every body starting from his rival Kamaluddin. As this matter has already been fully dealt with when discussing the salt trade, no further comments are considered necessary now. The report on the silk trade of Kantababu was recorded on the 20 April. The report of the silk contract signed by Samuel Middleton, Thomas Lane, George Vansittart, G. Hurst and Robert Palk read as under : "We have received your letter of 13th and 14th instant. Lokenath Nundee has a contract for 27500 pieces of silk piece goods amounting to Sicca Rs. 2,91956-4-0".⁶⁵ This was however the repetition of the figures supplied by the Board of Trade two days earlier.⁶⁶ Translated to Current Rupees the amount was C. Rs. 3,38,675-0-9. At the time of actual supply these contracts, as was usual, underwent certain changes. Accordingly it is found that the contract of Lokenath Nandy was finalised for 20625 pieces of silk piece goods valuing S^a Rs. 2,18967-3-0. W. Aldersey, chief of Cossimbazar also reported on 30 June that in the total investment of S^a Rs. 16,22,779-13-0 finalised upto the date the share of Lokenath Nandy was S^a Rs. 2,18967-3-0.⁶⁷ This was the new contract for the year 1775-76 which started from the beginning of the commercial year which was from April to March.

As the Majority did not think the contract of the year to be exciting enough, they fell back on the contracts of the year before i.e. 1774-75, which were already completed. In their letter to the Board of Directors of the Company of 3rd August 1775, the Majority insinuated, 'By the list sent in, it appears that Cantoo Baboo, the Governor General's Banyan, holds two contracts for Raw silk, one in the name of his son Lucknaut Nundie to the amount of C. Rs. 10,04,560, and one jointly in the names of Lucknaut Nundie and Barran Kissen Sing for C. Rs. 675395-1-6. The Board of Trade promised to let us know how the several contracts have been performed; but they have not yet done it.'⁶⁸ The Majority had access to the Board of Trade proceedings, it is curious therefore that they feigned ignorance about the performance of contracts which were already fulfilled. Their letter wanted to bring out two points. The insinuation was that not only were the contracts illegal but their fulfilment was also a

⁶⁵Home Dept. Public Proceedings of 20th April 1775 No. 9.

⁶⁶Board of Trade (Commercial), Proceedings of 18th April 1775.

⁶⁷Appendices to the Board of Trade (commercial), Proceedings of 7th August 1775, p. 294-295.

⁶⁸The General Letter from Bengal of 3rd August 1775 as quoted in the Ninth Report of the Select Committee 1783. Appendix No. 35(A), p. 194.

matter of uncertainty. If they had pointed out that such massive contracts had been successfully completed they might have lost their case entirely.

Aldersey reported on 10 March 1775, 'I am duly favoured with your letter of 20th ultimo and agreeable to your order I transmit you translates of the several contracts that were entered into last year. No. 1 is the one with Lokenaut Nundee for Bengal Raw silk. No. 2 is the contract for 50000 pieces of piece goods, 25000 of which were to be furnished by Porankissen Sing and 25000 by Lokenaut Nundee.' After describing the contracts Aldersey proceeded to remark on their performance. 'By the tenor of the Contract with Lokenaut Nundee, he was to have furnished 2100 Maunds of Bengal raw silk by the 1st of March, but at the same time you will observe, he has stipulated that in case the advances were made to him in less proportions than he first required, his deliveries would ofcourse fall short and in justification of his having provided a less quantity than was expected you will remark in the statement No. 5 that in June when he should have been paid 5,02,200 Rupees., he only received 3,78,201-1-9 Rs., and that in August when he began his deliveries and that he should have received altogether 8,78,990 Rupees, he was only advanced 6,81,041-1-9 Rs., this will therefore account for his requiring further time now, before he can compleat the deliveries of such quantity of silk as he has received money for and this I have acquainted him, will be taken on account of his contracts so that he is able to provide it without interfering with the Company's *naccauds* who will begin upon the winding off the new year's putney on the 15th instant.' Regarding the silk piece goods contract Aldersey reported, 'I have reasons to expect that by the 16th (or 18th) instant the piece goods Contractors will have delivered the whole quantity of 50,000 pieces and as it appears by the paper No. 4 that after they have furnished 50000 pieces they will be in advance Rs. 33654-4-6 and by the paper No. 6 that they have not yet received the full amount of the estimation of the 50000 pieces by Rupees 12,920-13-9. It will be necessary to acquaint you that this difference arises from their having furnished another quantity of the high priced goods than they engaged for, the reasons for which are assigned in annual remarks on the Investment which I had the pleasure of transmitting to you, the 8th instant. These papers, Gentlemen, together with the statement enclosed in my letter of the 17th ultimo will I hope give you very satisfactory information with respect to the last year's

Investment.'⁶⁹ There can be little doubt about the content of the letter. It was backed up by all the necessary papers and accounts.

'A statement of the several contracts enlisted into by the late chief for the provision of Cossimbazar silk Investment, 1774.

Lokenaut Nundee, Contractor for Raw silk

Amount contracted for	Mds. 2100	amounting to	Rs. Current	Rs.	1004560-0-0
Ditto received	„ 1431-	1-8	„ „ 675011-	14-9	
till the end of March	„ 569-	38-8	„ „ 259419-	8-0	
total Receipt	„ 2001-	0-0	„ „		Rs. 934431-6-9
(Nonsupply) will remain difference	„ 99-	0-0	„ „		„ 70128-9-3
Mds. 2100- 0-0 amounting to				C. Rs.	1004560-0-0'

It is clear from the account that out of Mds. 2100 contracted for, Lokenath supplied till the end of March 1775, 2001 Mds. for C. Rs. 9,34,431-6-9. It will be found that the other contract was also completed by the end of March.

'Lokenaut Nundee and Prankissen Sing, Contractor for silk piece goods.

Amount contracted for	50000	pieces amounting to	C. Rs.	655395- 1-6
Received and Approved	41443	„ „	Rs. 532960-	11-0
„ „ „ Further	4602	„ „	„ 33726-	8-6
Total	46,045	„ „	Rs.	621740-13-0
Will remain due from Contractors	3,955	„ „	Expected by the 2nd March	33654- 4-6
	50,000	„ „	amounting to	Rs. 655395-1-6 ⁷⁰

It will be evident from the above accounts that the Majority in its letter of 3rd August 1775 was maliciously and untruthfully bringing allegations against the Governor's Banian. According to the proceedings, both the Contracts were already completed by the end of March.

On 22 April, 1775 Hastings answered to all the charges made against him and his banian since 10 March 1775, in the shape of a letter to the Court of Directors. Here he refuted each and every charge and pointed out that the seal in the letter of Munny Begum was a forgery. He also

⁶⁹Board of Trade (Commercial), Proceedings of 28th March 1775, p. 551-555.

⁷⁰Appendices to the Board of Trade (Commercial), Proceedings of 28th March 1775, p. 38.

categorically remarked that, 'Cantoo Baboo was in possession of his talooks before my arrival.' He also placed a comparative account of the Jumma & Collection of all his farms, and in the years he had held them, with jumma continued to the end of the lease. This, Hastings clarified, compared with the general accounts of the Bengal province, will afford a more convincing proof than any words can offer, that Kantababu had received no indulgence or privilege from the protection of the Governor. The Governor General's letter did not meet with the approval of the Majority who sent out a separate minute on the subject maintaining there accusations on every point.⁷¹

The Proceedings of 5 May provided some digression. Nunda Roy, a servant of James Grant related what happened after Mohammad Reza Khan was imprisoned in 1772. Nunda Roy was then acting as the Treasury Daroga and so was in a position to see the affairs himself. He related how being appointed by the Committee of Circuit on 7 August 1772, Kishen Kunt and Santeram Sing waited next morning on the Begum and sent for Akbar Ally Cawn and Raja Gooroodas. When they arrived together they sealed up all the accounts of the Nawab Sircar on which three seals were put, one of Raja Gooroodas and one each of Kantababu and Santiram. After they were sealed the two Dewans namely Kantababu and Santiram Singh appointed Nayansukh and Bowanny Prosad Metre as ameens on the part of the Governor and Mr. Middleton was asked to check the accounts.⁷²

Both sides were getting fully prepared for a showdown. The Majority was upto the period, undoubtedly the winning side. They had been able to corner the Governor by opposing his every administrative move and by challenging his every act. Allegations against Hastings and his banian were rolling in like a sea in high tide. The Governor was fighting with his back to the wall, proving not only the charges against himself but also against his banian were utterly false and unfounded.

George Vansittart in the meantime kept himself busy to unearth some of the motives of the Majority particularly in relation to the Ranis of Burdwan and Rajshahi. He sent his report to Hastings on the 10 May

⁷¹G. W. Forrest Ed. Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings of 22nd April 1775 as reported in Selections from the Letters, Despatches & other State papers preserved in the Foreign Dept. Vol. II. p. 90-107.

⁷²Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings of 5th May 1775, p. 1265-1285.

1775 in a secret memo. He informed, 'The Burdwan Ranny in consideration of the services rendered her agreed to make the following payments:

To General Clavering, Col. Monson and Mr. Francis	Rs.	2,00,000
„ Mr. Fowke	„	30,000
„ Nundcomar	„	30,000
„ Radachurn	„	5,000
	<hr/>	
	Rs.	2,65,000

'The end of March or beginning of April, Neelmunny Mr. Francis' banian went to Chinsura to hasten the payments but returned without effect. Two days afterwards Rs. 15000 arrived in Calcutta and about the 9th April Rs. 10000 and both the sums were deposited in Mr. F's house.

'On the 16th April a bill was received by Roopnarrayan Chowdry enclosed in a letter from the Ranny for Rs. 3100 drawn on Mootychund's house at Chinsura. He showed it to Nundcomar who said he would inform the General'.....'On the 4th May a Bill arrived with 'N.C.' (for Nundcomar)..amounting to Sonnout Rs. 10000.'.....'The following agreement has been made with Ramkissen of Radshay :—

To Clavering, Monson and Francis —Rs. 2,00000

To Fowke and Nundcomar — „ 40000

The 27th 21000 Rs. was received by Nundcomar'.

Vansittart further informed :—

'Neelmunny Surma — Banyan to Francis

Bisnuram Surma — Brother of the above

An old man solely dependent on Nundcomar

Samchurn Surma — Brother of the Banyan of Bristowe

Becharam Surma — Dependent on Nundcomar

Ramkissen — The adopted son of the Ranny of Radshay. A man of no understanding. The farm of Radshy has lately been granted to him by the interest of Nundcomar.'

Hastings is also reminded of Nandakumar's incorrigible habit of forging letters as he once did in the name of 'V', sending a letter to Hastings in Madras.⁷³

⁷³British Museum, Add. Mss. 48370, f. 3-11 & 25-29.

Then there was a dramatic change in the wind. Maharaja Nandakumar was arrested on the charge of felony on the 6 May 1775, and cast into the common prison the next day. He wrote a letter to the Supreme Board from his prison which opened the proceedings of the Council on 8 May. The Majority was extremely angry and tried to remove Nandakumar from prison with the plea that the place was unsuitable for the Raja, forgetting completely that Nandakumar had known earlier imprisonments. Now a hue and cry was raised by the Majority who tried to maintain that among common felons his religious customs and prejudices as a Brahmin, would be greatly impaired. General Clavering suddenly remembered that the Governor's Banian presided over the 'Caste Cutcherry' and summoned his presence. 'I move that Cantoo Baboo, the Governor General's Banian who I understand presides at a Cutcherry of castes and passes judgement in this Court on all points relative to their losing their castes, be called before the Board and examined upon those particulars.' Hastings tried to explain that the Caste Cutcherry was an unimportant institution and its jurisdiction was limited to the disputes between the lower kinds of people. This office was traditionally held by the banians of the Governors of Calcutta from time immemorial. The usage did not qualify the person who held the office to pronounce judgement on matters of grave importance with any authority. He is neither versed in the laws of his religion nor of that sect which could entitle him to give judicial opinion. But the Governor was over-ruled by the Majority. Col. Monson, let his anger burst into words, abusing Kantababu in any manner he pleased. The reason for the anger of the Majority became clear when it came to be known through an outburst of General Clavering that he believed along with the other members of the Majority, that Kantababu was considered to be one of the persons responsible for the arrest of Nandakumar. 'I am informed that this same Banyan is the secret mover of the whole conspiracy against Nundcomar, jointly with Graham's Moonshy and that infamous creature Camaul O'Deen Cawn.'⁷⁴

As the dialogue recorded is one of the few direct narrations from Kantababu it should be studied carefully. Kantababu was called suddenly to face the Board when he was quite unprepared, not having any opportunity of discussing the issue with the Governor. The other interesting fact that is revealed is that there is no mention of a translator anywhere,

⁷⁴(1) Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings of 8th May 1775, p. 1286-1320.

(2) Forrest, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 365-372.

which makes it almost certain that he knew English. The simple short sentences recorded in the interview show that he knew the language slightly better than the other natives of his time. Incidentally it may be noticed that the few order sheets that are found in the Hastings' papers show that the Governor instructed his Banian in English. Kantababu however wrote in Bengali the content of each document before filing. This secretarial function will be discussed further in detail later. Before the interview is recorded it is necessary to assess what the Majority expected to gain here. First, they were very angry on Kantababu as they believed him to be heading the conspiracy against Nandakumar; so one of the clear intentions was to harass him. Secondly, they were incensed by the Governor's attempt to stop the interview and felt that the Governor certainly had something to hide; so they insisted on examining his banian. Thirdly, they must have felt that there was more in the Caste Cutcherry regulations than the Governor wanted them to believe which might lead towards helping Nandakumar. Fourthly, the Majority by examining Kantababu wanted to find out whether any statement by the President of the Caste Cutcherry would help them in the case of Nandakumar. Fifthly and lastly, they hoped certainly to know more about the conspiracy and felt that by questioning Kantababu, they might get some idea of the plan and programme of the Governor.

It was very widely believed not only by many of his contemporaries but also by some later writers⁷⁵ that Hastings perpetuated the trial and death of Nandakumar. Scholars have also burnt much midnight oil to prove that Hastings was innocent.⁷⁶ Be that as it may, there can be no doubt about the fact that Hastings was the main beneficiary. Trotter puts it in a learned legal language, 'Because Nandakumar's death may have removed a viper out of Hastings' path, 'post hoc' need not be translated 'propter hoc'. There is no valid evidence to support this view.'⁷⁷ It must be said to the credit of Hastings that there is not a single direct proof by which he can be even remotely connected with the trial or the punishment. The same was true about Kantababu, only in a greater

⁷⁵(a) N. K. Sinha., Trial of Maharaja Nandakumar, *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. LXXVIII No. 146. July-December 1959, p. 135-145.

(b) H. Beveridge. The Trial of Nandkumar. (1886)

⁷⁶(a) J. D. M. Derret. Nandakumar's Forgery, *English Historical Review*, LXXV (1960), p. 223-238.

(b) J. F. Stephens. The story of Nuncomar and the Impeachment of Sir Elijah Impey. (1885)

⁷⁷Trotter, Warren Hastings, p. 119.

degree. It will be evident from the interview of Kantababu with the members of the Supreme Board what a careful man he was. His answers proved his self-control and intelligence.

'Cantoo Baboo is called in (to depose regarding Caste Cutcherry).

Cantoo Baboo attending agreeable to the Order of the Board, he is called in and following questions are put to him by General Clavering.

- Q. — Where do you hold your Caste Cutcherry ?
 A. — Opposite to the West Front of this House.
 Q. — What kind of cases do you take cognisance of ?
 A. — All cases which respect the caste, such as of persons having lost their castes or any disputes relating to marriages.
 Q. — Have you any body to assist you on the Judgements which you give in these cases ?
 A. — There are a Darogah and Moherir to settle small cases and such as they cannot determine or are represented to me, any case of Mussalman which cannot be decided there are referred to Moulovies of the Court.
 Q. — Is your sentence final ?
 A. — I never knew an instance of an Appeal to any other Court. If the persons are not satisfied with my decision they complain to the Governor.

Question by the Governor General.

- Q. — Are not your Decrees all brought to me for signature ?
 A. — I take them to the Governor to report them to him, he signs them and also signs whatever sunnud are granted.

Questions by the General Clavering.

- Q. — What are the punishments usually inflicted upon those who have committed any great offence ?
 A. — It is generally customary for them to give an Entertainment to their friends and to pay the expence of the peons who are placed over them and this is levied in proportion to their faults.
 Q. — Do you ever punish by fine or imprisonment ?
 A. — Never by fines but sometimes, if the person against whom a decree is passed is obstinate he is confined for one or two days.

- Q. — By whose Orders do you put Peons over the people ?
- A. — By the Governor General's orders. He has directed me to acquaint him whenever a peon is placed over a delinquent.
- Q. — How long have you presided at this Cutcherry ?
- A. — From the time the Governor came to Chair. It is usual for it to be under the Direction of the Governor.
- Q. — Did Mr. Verelst's and Cartier's Banyans preside in that office before you ?
- A. — They did and those that preceded them also.* I know it from the time of Mr. Vansittart's Government which was the time when I came to Calcutta.
- Q. — Is ablution a necessary part of the Hindu Religion ?
- A. — If a person is in health it is proper, but when a man is sick he cannot perform it.

Questions by the Governor General.

- Q. — Is it held criminal if a man when in Health does not perform his ablutions regularly ?
- A. — Whether it be a crime, or not a crime is written in the Books of Religion. I do not profess to be conversant in them.
- Q. — Are you a Brahmin ?
- A. — No.
- Q. — Are not the Brahmins enjoined to be more particularly observant in the ceremonies of this Religion than the other castes ?
- A. — The injunction is equal upon all castes, but the Brahmins have particular Orders in their Books which I am not conversant in.
- Q. — Are not ablutions necessary before you take your substance ?
- A. — It is customary to bathe and pray before we take any substance, but in case we cannot bathe it is necessary for us to pray before we eat. Persons of low caste eat without bathing.
- Q. — If you yourself had the misfortune to be confined in a prison, would you think yourself in danger of losing your caste ?
- A. — Merely to be confined I should be under no apprehension for my caste, but a person confined for Robbery or Murder loses his caste.

* Nubkissen held this office during the Governorship of Lord Clive. See N. N. Ghose, *Memoirs of Maharajah Nubkissen Bahadur* (1901).

Cantoo Baboo is now acquainted that the Board having no further questions to put to him, he may withdraw.⁷⁸ The proceedings bear the signatures of Warren Hastings, Geo. (George) Monson, Richd. (Richard) Barwell and P. Francis, but curiously there is no signature of General Clavering. This seems to be rather unusual. Was he so over wrought not being able to extract anything from the interview that he forgot to sign the proceedings ?

All this enquiry about the caste prejudices in the common jail soon turned out to be manifestations of politics. Sir Elijah Impey, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court examined Kantababu and on 16 May 1775 wrote to the Board, 'Last night I received the Inclosed Extracts of the Shastras from the Pundits. The Translations accompany them, I have this moment procured. By these it will appear how little foundation there was for the scruples of the Maharajah...I have also examined Canto Baboo who acts as President of the Cast Cutcherry as to his opinion what effect the Maharajah's confinement would have on his caste and like wise as to what he had deposed at the Board.

'I must observe that he says in case of confinement for crimes proved on the prisoner the caste will certainly be hurt, he does not say it will be lost. This is not the case of the Maharajah. No crime is proved upon him but he is positively charged with an offence which it will be incumbent on the prosecutor to prove at this Trial.

'Was it to be understood that caste was lost by confinement on a criminal charge, it would go to claim of exemption from all crimes. As this examination as far as it goes appears to me to lead to a conclusion contrary to that drawn by the Board, I cannot but apprehend (that) he must have given information to your Board very different from that which he has thought fit to communicate to me and I am solicitous to be thoroughly informed in this matter which from the number of Brahmins in the country is of the utmost consequence. I should esteem it as a favour from the Board if they would communicate to me a copy of the Original Examination. I have been delighted in my Enquiries and have not yet been able to hear of one black man whose opinion is not that the Maharaja's scruples are a mere pretence.'

⁷⁸Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings of 8th May 1775, p. 1317-1319.

Those who have had the opportunity of reading through the examination of Kantababu of the 8 May, know that what he revealed before the Board and what he told the Chief Justice were the same. His opinion had been very constant as would appear from the proceedings of the 8 May and the letter of the Chief Justice quoted above. It is once again clear that the Majority twisted his opinion to serve their selfish gains when they represented themselves before the Chief Justice, misquoting Kantababu. Now the lie had been detected, if a copy of the examination was sent to the Chief Justice, their motive would have the clearest of proofs. So what followed in the Board was a veritable Greek satire.

- 'Governor General — (questions the Board) — Whether the request of the Chief Justice for being furnished with a copy of the examinations of Cantoo Baboo before the Board on the 8th instant respecting castes shall be complied with.
- Mr. Francis — I think not.
- Colonel Monson — As I have allowed all persons, who have been examined before the Council, copies of their Examination, I have no objection for Contoo Baboo having a copy of his, if he requires it, but I think the Chief Justice has no right to require from us any information that may be given to us, therefore do not think it proper to comply with Sir Elijah Impey's Request.
- General Clavering — The only cause for which the examination required by Sir E. Impey could be (of) use to him is now past...I am of the opinion that Sir Elijah Impey's Request should not be complied with.'⁷⁹

As usual the Majority opinion prevailed and the Governor General wrote to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, 'We must decline communicating to you a copy of Cantoo Baboo's Examination at our Board, as such examinations are taken for our information only.' It is needless to dwell on the trial of Nandakumar about which so much has already been written and there is no doubt that further detailed study

⁷⁹Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings of 16th May 1775, p. 1381-1383, p. 1391-1393 and O.C. No. 498.

in the future will bring forth more revelations. Suffice it to comment that no where in the trial, Hastings or his banian was associated. During the whole period of the trial both of them stayed in the city watching the proceedings carefully. This is a matter of not a little acclamation. Hastings and Kantababu not only kept themselves away but also cleverly humbled the Majority forcing them to keep away also from the trial about forgery and felony. On the 16 May 1775 an Affidavit was sworn by the Majority, 'Whereas it has been asserted by Sir Elijah Impey, in a letter written by him to the Governor General and Council on the 15th instant, that reports had been publicly circulated in this town that if the Judges could not be prevailed upon to release the Maharaja Nundcomar he would be delivered by force. We hereby most solemnly declare that we never ourselves conceived such an intention, nor ever heard of such a design in any Member of Government or by anybody else, nor did we ever hear any mention of such a report till we read it in Sir Elijah Impey's letter above mentioned.

Signed : John Clavering
George Monson
Philip Francis

Sworn before me.

Sd. Warren Hastings.⁸⁰

With the Majority safely tucked away, the trial of Maharaja Nandakumar proceeded very quickly which has been termed by some scholars as an 'unseemly haste'. Nandakumar was arrested and cast into the prison after the charges were framed on the 6 and 7 May 1775. Nothing happened for one month. The Trial started in the Supreme Court on 8 June, went on continuously and on 16 June he was pronounced guilty. He was alive for even more than a fortnight after the sentence and was executed by hanging on the 5 August 1775.

In spite of the fact that the Majority considered Kantababu to be the main progenitor in the conspiracy against Maharaja Nandakumar, there is absolutely no proof that can even give rise to any conjecture. There are certain facts however which will now be discussed in the hope of throwing more light in this matter. Nrisingha Nandy, Kantababu's younger brother took the service of Nandakumar in 1773. It is almost

⁸⁰G. W. Forrest. op. cit. Secret Select Committee Proceedings of 16th May 1775, Vol. II, p. 378.

certain that it was through this source that Kantababu came to know about the movements of Nandakumar. It is not likely that Nrisingha was conversant about the deed as it was before he joined the services of the Maharaja. Mohan Prosad, the appellant was undoubtedly moving on his own. If he had any connections with the Governor's people there is absolutely nothing to prove it.

The Chief Justice summed up the case. 'There is certainly a great improbability that a man of Maharajah Nundcomar's rank and fortune should be guilty of so mean an offence for so small a sum of money.' He instructed the Jury, 'You will again and again consider the character of the prosecutor and his witnesses, the distance of the prosecution from the time, the offence (that) is supposed to be committed, the proof and the nature of the confessions said to be made by the prisoner, his rank and fortune.' A very pregnant incident happened on the last day of the trial that is 15 June 1775. It was a Thursday, at about midnight the counsel for the defence, who was no other than Mr. Farrar, the best barrister then available in Calcutta, closed his evidence. Closing the case Farrar, utterly exhausted quitted the court and went home to bed. It was then that the Court was informed that Nanda Kumar had something to say. He desired that one of his own witnesses namely Krisnajiban Dass, should be recalled and questioned as to the 'Kararnama' (Ekrarnama—a written statement of account). This witness completely destroyed the case for Maharaja Nandakumar. At four o'clock of the morning of the 16 June, Jarret of Jarret and Foxcroft the prisoner's attorney went to Farrar's bedside and woke him up, to tell him that the jury had just brought the verdict of guilty. When the beaten advocate dragged himself out of bed some hours later in the morning, he found on his table this note from his junior C. F. Brix, "Dear Sir,—It is with infinite concern I communicate to you what you may probably have already heard from Messrs. Jarret and Foxcroft, that the Rajah hath not only been found guilty, but Mr. Durham, on behalf of the prosecutor, hath undertaken to prosecute Mir Asad Ali, Sheikh Yar Mohomed and Kissen Juan Dass, for perjury at the instance of the Court. How unlucky is the Rajah to have brought this misfortune upon himself by desiring the last examination of Juan Dass; which hath overset all the weight of his former evidence." In the light of this letter, written as a private correspondence by one of Nandakumar's counsel to the other, it can be concluded that the last evidence of Krisna Jiban Das was the most damaging to the case which Brix believed would have concluded favourably for Nandakumar. In the

own words of Brix, 'Sir Elijah, in summing up the evidence, observed that having proved from the first moment of his examination till the time the evidence was closed a fair and candid witness, he would have directed the Jury to find him not guilty, as he looked upon the existence of the coromana clearly proved by him till the moment he prevaricated in his examination after the evidence was closed.' The diligence and humanity of Brix needs to be put on record, he continued, 'I enclose the notes you gave Sir Elijah, of which, as well as of mine, he made use; after having taken some rest, which I am much in want of, not having slept more than two hours since three o'clock yesterday morning, I will wait on you to consult what steps are necessary to be taken, in which I will with pleasure afford you every assistance in my power, as I pity the old man's case.'⁸¹

The main purpose of describing the last day of the Trial is to establish that one Krisna Jiban Dass who came as a witness for Nandakumar finally destroyed the case for him as was believed by the junior counsel of Nandakumar, who was present during the proceedings. It is not at all known who this Krisnajiban Das was or what happened to him after the trial and death of Maharaja Nandakumar on the 5 August 1775.

On 16 August Hastings issued an pay order as follows:— 'To Contoo Baboo, Pay Kishen Jiwun Neace Lauker the sum of one thousand Sicca Rupees on my account, Warren Hastings.' This is in his own handwriting. On the obverse side Kantababu as was the usual practice with him writes in Bengali the date of the payment and the name and address of the person paid; Translated it would read thus, 'Date 17 August on account of Hastings Shaheb paid to Krisna Jiban Nyasandagar, who is an inhabitant of Baranagore, Rs. 1000/-'.⁸²

Now the problem is whether this Krisnajiban was that Krisnajiban. The surname is of course different but at the same time it is a very funny and unusual surname. Nothing can be made out of Hastings 'Neace Lauker'. Cantoo's version is slightly better but no surname is known to have existed at the time or later as 'Nyasandagar'. If the word is read as 'Naya Saudagar' then of course some meaning can be attributed, though as a surname it is still unusual. Naya Saudagar is the new respectable merchant (*Saudagar* is an established merchant as against the *Banik* who

⁸¹All the materials about the last day of Nandakumar's Trial has been taken from H. E. Busteed, *The Echoes of Old Calcutta* (1888), (2nd Edition), p. 80-85.

⁸²British Museum. Add. Mss. 29227, f. 367-368.

is just an ordinary merchant). As a merchant he was certainly a non-brahmin using the common surname 'Dass' in the courts of law. If it is assumed that 'Krisnajiban Nayasaudagar' was his business name he would possibly write Krisna Jiban Dass in the Court proceedings. This however proves nothing. There is nothing to prove that the two Krisñajibans were one and the same. They could well be two different persons and Hastings could have paid S^a Rs. 1000/- to one of them in his personal account for certain services rendered to him. Yet the date, the timing, the name cannot but leave a lurking suspicion in the mind. Was Kantababu being cynical and sarcastic when he gave him the surname of 'new respectable merchant' ? There is absolutely no way to further resolve this problem.

The inactivity of the Majority was evident in their behaviour during the Trial of Nandakumar. They did absolutely nothing for the man who did everything for them. The resolution that burnt the letter of Nandakumar written in the last few days of his life, by the hands of a common hangman rank as the greatest example of cowardice. Francis as usual was quick in suggesting an efficient resolution to propose the burning of the letter of Nandakumar sent to the Council by the hands of General Clavering, which was approved unanimously.⁸³ The English translation of the other letter of Nandakumar written to Francis has however been found among Francis' Papers. This pathetic letter has been translated by an inferior person. 'Nandcoomar's letter, a translate from the Bengal original date 31st July 1775'. 'I am now thinking that I have but a short time to live, for among the English Gentry, Armenians, Moors and Gentoos, few there is who is not against me, but those that are not for me is continually devising all the mischief they can imagine against me.'⁸⁴ Francis destroyed the original letter.

All that the Majority did on hearing about the arrest of Nandakumar on the 6 May 1775 was to dismiss Munny Begum from her pos. as the guardian of the Nawab and appoint Raja Gurudas to the vacancy, hoping perhaps that thus elevated Raja Gurudas will do everything necessary to save his father. The Majority by shirking their responsibility did not gain anything. Hastings however bitterly complained against this move to the

⁸³Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings of 16th August 1775, p. 413-414.

⁸⁴H. E. Busteed. Last letter of Nundcomar as printed in the Echoes of Old Calcutta (1888), p. 84-85.

Court of Directors. He demanded Justice.⁸⁵ The Majority however also mounted their attack on the Governor General and his Banian. Every meeting of the Council resembled a veritable battlefield. The resolutions and counter resolutions minuted against each other not only demonstrate the bitter feelings one had against the other but also a futile verbal warfare.

The anger of the Majority was expressed in the dismissal of Munny Begum. Goring acting on instructions divested her of her office. Raja Gurudas was invested with the authority of the Begum on the 17 May, 1775. The Begum's eunuch Etwar Ally Khan was dismissed and the account kept by Coosal Chand seized. This immediately led Moolchund, a jeweller to lodge a complaint of debt against the Nawab in the Supreme Court, who wanted to take out a writ for seizing his person. According to the resolution proposed by General Clavering, the salary received by Munny Begum was stopped from the day she ceased to be the guardian of the Nawab.⁸⁶ Goring did not rest there. He researched into the *sheristha* of Munny Begum unearthing several rather innocuous letters written by Kantababu to her and sent their translations to the Council. These letters will once again reveal how careful Kantababu had been in his communications and how much he had been trusted by Munny Begum. It has also been said that the Begum received Kantababu in person and talked to him herself from behind a screen, as was the custom of the day. These informations definitely increase the importance of Kantababu not only as a negotiator but also as the right hand man of the Governor General. The translations of the letters of Kantababu which were in Persian to Munny Begum were sent down by Goring with his letter of 13 June 1775, presumably the letters, which bear no date, were of 1774 or even earlier.

Letter No. 1.

'No. 18. After taking my leave of you I proceeded on my journey and on Sunday the 21st Shabaun* I arrived at Calcutta in good health and paid my respects to the Governor. For your information I write this. I hope that you will now and then honor me with your letters.'

⁸⁵British Museum. Letter to the Court of Directors 18th May 1775, Add. Mss. 29136, f. 202.

⁸⁶Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings of 25th May 1775, p. 381-382. -

* Shabaun or Sravan was from 10th July to 9th August presumably of 1774 or earlier.

Letter No. 2.

'No. 19. After taking my leave of you I proceeded to Calcutta where through the favour of the Almighty I arrived in good health and have had the Honor of paying my respects to my master. I write this for your information.'

Letter No. 3.

'No 20. I have had the honor to receive the Favour of your letter setting forth, "That the Gomastah of Singeah etc. are guilty of the greatest outrages in the collection of the Pykash** Revenue of the Jumma of Goreepore and that having got together a large body of people they have cut and carried away the produce of the Ground." Respectable Madam! How dare this Gomastah in the affairs of the Sircar commit such acts of misbehaviour and insolence. They can be the cause of no obstructions further than is consistent with the Bundibust which they took in Farm, and for which Mushulkas were last year given to the Gentlemen. Designing people must have represented this matter to you in false light. If it pleases God, I shall in a few days have the honor of paying my Respects to you when I shall explain everything particularly.' A very diplomatic letter indeed.

Letter No. 4

'No. 21. I addressed you before respecting the place you have in Calcutta, and you were pleased to issue your commands to the Daroga to have it surveyed and to take a list of the things that were in it, which was accordingly done and the list was transmitted (to) you by the Daroga. Having since been upon a journey I have not troubled you further about it, but now request if it is your pleasure to favour me with it, to send orders to the Darogah to that purport that I may take possession of it and put it in order. Or if you have other intentions please do signify your commands to me, that I may enquire of other accomodations.'

Did Munny Begum want Kantababu to remove the effects of her Calcutta Palace or wanted him to rent it or buy it ? Was this the house in Chitpore or in some other place? Or was this another letter in code signifying things completely different? The guarded way of expression creates such a suspicion. What journey was Kantababu referring to ?

** Pykash, should be Pesh Kash. Kash=to draw, Pesh=from, meaning 'advance payment on the stipulated revenue'. (Firminger Vol. III. Glossary. p. 41.)

Letter No. 5.

'No. 22. After taking leave of you I proceeded in my Journey and on 19th of Saffer arrived at the place of my destination and have had the Happiness of paying my respects to my master. I am hopeful that considering me as one of your sincerest wellwishers, you will do me the Honor to write (to) me concerning your Health and welfare. What more shall I write.'⁸⁷

The onslaught of the Majority went on unabated. After the death of Nandakumar the charges became particularly obnoxious for Hastings and his banian. Col. Monson even brought accusations of a most extraordinary nature against the character of the Governor, who vindicated himself on the 14 September 1775. Charges against Kantababu flowed in regularly. His salt and silk trades were also not spared. The Majority showed a very particular interest in his Farms which featured regularly in the proceedings of 1775, 1776 and 1777. Complaints against Kantababu's Amberabad farm was discussed on the 7 June, 18 August and 3 November 1775, the Chunakhali farm came up on 28 June and 22 December 1775, Gayabari farm which was a part of Baharbund came up on 11 June, 21 June, 27 December 1776 and 18 February 1777, the Baharbund farm itself never ceased to be a matter of complaint. Similarly the discussion on Bissenpore and Patchet continued for a long time after Kantababu had ceased to be the security. The Jehangeerpore farm came up for discussion on the 20 May 1777 and the 9/16 part of the Tumlook farm were discussed on 7 November 1775 and 23 July 1776. Complaints about all the farms were discussed on 27 September 1776 4 April and 13 May 1777, settlement objections were recorded on 29 November 1776 and 2 May 1777. As the farms will be separately discussed in detail in Chapter III of this book, no discussion about them are taken up here. Suffice it to say that not a single charge could be sustained against Kantababu, who proved to the satisfaction of the unbiassed that all the allegations brought against him were false and malicious.

Understandably Hastings was upset. Apart from defending himself against the vicious charges brought against him, he had to speak for all the others who were attacked by the Majority in the Council. Moreover the charges against the farms that were held by Kantababu made some

⁸⁷Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings of 24th July 1775, No. 4(A).

headway with the Court of Directors. Sykes, as usual always extremely thoughtful about the welfare of Kantababu, was also perturbed. He wrote on 16 December 1775, 'The Council deserved the utmost censure for the extraordinary violence and hasty attack upon one of the best characters, without one single ground, circumstance or proof for their allegations and that they deserved to be censured for such bitter reflections and hints without deducing one proof.'⁸⁸ On 13 May Sykes' fear that Hastings may be recalled, is quite evident from the letter, 'Pray before your departure do something if possible for my two relations Jack and Francis Sykes also Davis and his wife next to them. Settle Cantoo somewhere privately and if possible peaceably, otherwise he will from Party be in much Trouble, my respects to him. His holding the lands I have explained till I am tired, they will not see the propriety of having substantial men in the management of the collections.'⁸⁹ It is not known whether Hastings was contemplating resignation at this time or what he thought about his banian in the event of his recall, but the planning of his opposite camp, is evident from an undated piece of paper found in the Francis' manuscripts. Francis planned to man the important offices of the Government with his own nominees, who curiously enough all turn out to be friends and associates of Nandakumar. This document, an interesting proof of the thinking of the Majority, is quoted. 'Blackmen qualified for Employment.' 'Laula Mahausook' comment, 'A man of family and shrewd, uncommon steadiness at the trial of Mr. Fowke.' ... 'very fit to succeed Bhawany Churn as Committee's Dewan in Burdwan'. 'Bridgee Kishore Roy Byde, fit for Committee's Dewan of Dacca'. 'Goreechand Roy fit for Committees Dewan of Nuddea.'

Philip Francis planned to retire Maharaja Krisnachandra of Nadia forcibly and to put his youngest son in charge of the 'Nuddea Estate'. Dislike for the Maharaja may have generated because of his refusal to oblige the Majority by sending complaints against the Governor and his banian. There is a suggestion that Krisnachandra would be enticed to retirement by the promise of an handsome pension. Francis wanted to overrule the claim of the eldest son of the Nadia-Raja, he notes, 'the eldest son is a slave to H.' Francis even thought of getting rid of some old friends as well. He considered putting Roy Hurpurshud as the Paishkar of Raja Gooroodas in place of Juggut Chund, the son-in-law of Nanda-

⁸⁸British Museum. Add. Mss. 29136, f. 426-432.

⁸⁹British Museum. Add. Mss. 29137, f. 190-191.

kumar. Baugwanta Roy was considered fit to be the Committee's Dewan in Murshidabad in place of Raja Doolal Roy whom Francis considered weak and totally dependent on Raja Davy Sing, who was *moonsey* to Sooderuddin's man. About the post of Roy Rayan, Francis could not make any decision, though he favoured 'Rady Churn' the other son-in-law and close associate of Nandakumar and felt that, 'if properly supported, perhaps it would be difficult to find another who in all particulars would do so well.' Francis however could not help giving vent to his feelings when he unhesitatingly wrote, 'All the servants of the present Roy Royan are so notoriously the creatures of Kuntoo Baboo and the Roy Royan has neither acquired knowledge or natural abilities.'⁹⁰

This dislike of Francis was fully shared by the other two members of the Majority which led to continuous and sometimes meaningless harassment of Kantababu. No opportunity to vilify him were ever forgotten. Criticising the appointment of Kantababu to the Caste Cutcherry, Col. Monson said, 'Cantoo Babu who is the person that is said to preside over this Court, I understand to be a Banyan and a person of of very low and inconsiderable family. I have understood that when the Governor General first came into this country Cantoo Baboo served him for a salary of 15 or 20 Rs. per month. That he rose in esteem and consideration with the people, as the Governor General rose in his rank in the Company's service.'⁹¹ General Clavering was direct in his attack, 'I am informed that this same Banyan is the secret mover of the whole conspiracy against Nundcomar.'⁹²

It was therefore natural that the charges of the Majority against Kantababu should take extraordinary lines. The charge of taking a bribe from the Rani of Burdwan usually known as the Khansamanny affair was examined by the Board on the 31 October 1775. The enclosure number 21 contained the answer to article 'Cantoo Baboo' in number 2. No particular account was sent. 'Consultation 4 September 1775', extracted from the Proceedings of the Provincial Council of Revenue at Burdwan, reads as follows, 'The Zemindarry Dewan acquainted the Board that Sam Burrah (Shyam Barooah) attends with his account to prove this article, from Bysack 4th to 1st Assar 1179. Being called in he deposes that Brijoo Kishore Roy paid five thousand Rupees in Calcutta

⁹⁰I.O.R. Philip Francis Manuscripts, Mss. EUR. C. 78, p. 477-479.

⁹¹Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings (N.A.) of 8th May 1775, p. 1286-1320.

⁹²Ibid.

and ordered him to insert it in the accounts as 'received by Cantoo Baboo...5000/-'. On being categorically questioned that whether he knew if Cantoo Baboo received the above sum, Shyam Barooah replied, 'No, I only inserted it in the account agreeably to Brijoo Kishore's order, who told me that Laul Beharry Roy paid the money'. 'Sam Burrah' was the Khansamanny Mohurur, who had no proof that the money was paid to Kantababu. Similarly in Enclosure 22 which dealt with the article of Krisna Chatterjee, Shyam Barooah deposed that 'I heard it verabally from Laul Beharry Roy, vakeel.'⁹³ Thus both the cases were built on hearsay. The two persons who claimed to have paid the money themselves were never called to depose before the Board of Revenue. The whole matter of bribing Kantababu thus looks extremely unconvincing.

The prejudice of the Majority and particularly of Col. Monson is nowhere more pronounced than in the affair of 'Bugrut Sing'. Monson declared, 'Altho' Bugrut Sing may have served in low stations, he is never the less of a good caste being of the Keteree caste which is the second in precedence and rank.' After delivering these opening salvos, Monson proceeded to suddenly attack Kantababu, 'If the pedigree of the first Banians in these provinces were to be enquired into, I believe there are few who would be found to be of as good a caste as this man. I have understood that the Governor's Banian, who is now supposed to have (been) acquiring as great a fortune as ever was amassed by one individual, to be of a very inferior caste and that he has served in the lowest capacities and that his father was a kite-maker, which I take to be a trade, not of the first rank in these Provinces.* I believe Rajah Nobkissen's family, Santiram Sing, Ram Rutten Tagore are not of better families than Bugrut Sing.' Monson was quite confused by the caste system in Bengal. He learned about the four castes emulated by Manu but probably was unable to find any of them. He confused the caste of Bugrut Singh who was a Khetree with the Kshattriya, the second caste. Kshattriyas were non-existent in Bengal and Khetree of Bihar are a Sudra sect who have nothing to do with Kshattriyas. Similarly he could not comprehend that a Tagore is generally a Brahmin the first caste that he had read about. Nobkissen, Santiram and Kantababu all belonged to

⁹³Revenue Department Proceedings of 31st October 1775, p. 5397-5398.

* The ignorance of Col. Monson deserves to be taken lightly particularly in comparison with certain young scholars of History who have allowed their imagination to run amuck suggesting fantastic nonsense with the help of fourth hand printed materials. Read—Two case studies of Caste mobility in Bengal, H. Sanyal (Journal of Asian Studies Vol. XXX, No. 2 Feb. 1971).

the Nabasakh (generally translated as the nine branches of non-brahmin castes of Bengal) which was however too difficult for Monson to understand. Suffice it to say here that each of the three gentlemen belonged to his own sub-caste. Monson's reference of Kantababu as the son of a 'Kite-flier' raised the Governor General to his feet. In a smashing reply Hastings said, 'Twice the name of Cantoo Baboo my Banyan has been mentioned on the subject of this debate, which has not the least relation to him. On my presenting the petition against the Midnapore Talookdars, the General (Clavering) told me he had a petition to deliver against Cantoo Baboo which he has promised to lay before the Board next Tuesday and Colonel Monson has been discovering that Cantoo Baboo was the son of a kite-maker. I am compelled on this occasion to take a part in this extraordinary mode of argument and I do inform the Board from my own knowledge that the father of Cantoo Baboo was a man of substance and credit at Cossimbazar and I believe known to have been such by many Gentlemen now in England long before his son was born. I think it is not necessary to answer the other allegations in the above minutes.'⁹⁴

In spite of the weakness of their allegations the Majority however never missed a chance at harassment. On 18 June Colonel Monson once again alleged that the youngest brother of Kantababu 'Gowreychurn' who was working in the Amin Daftar did not know Persian. Hastings had appointed Goculchandra, who was variously known as Gorachand and also Gour Charan, to the Amin Daftar at Bhagalpur in 1774 as a canongoe of 'Boglepoor, Colgong and Chee.' Goculchandra had in course of the two years reached the Amin Daftar at Calcutta. This was considered exceptional as the incumbent happened to be the youngest brother of the Governor's banian. Hastings as usual rose in defence and said, 'I shall make only one remark upon the above minute to wit, that Colonel Monson was certainly not rightly informed by those who told him that 'Gowrey Churn', the Brother of Cantoo Baboo, who now fills the office of Aumeen Dafter, did not at the time of his appointment understand a word of the Persian language, because to my knowledge he did understand it, having early received an education superior to most young men of his profession. I did at the time regard him, notwithstanding his youth, as amply qualified to fill the office which was then allotted to him, especially in this requisite, altho' my intention in giving him that appointment was

⁹⁴Revenue Department Proceedings of 7th June 1776, p. 1620-1624.

in effect no more than to enable me to retain a share in the control of the general office of the Khalsa'.⁹⁵ Nothing further was heard about this matter.

While Hastings was defending every charge, almost against everybody, Francis Sykes in England was doing the same to save Hastings. George Vansittart was deputed with all the facts to strengthen the hands of Sykes. The atmosphere was tense both in Calcutta and London, while both the parties hoped to win their suit.

Bad news contained in Sykes' letter to Hastings of 3 April 1776, '...the only point the ministerial Directors thought proper to agitate was, Contoo's holding lands to the amount of 5 or 6 lacks in open defiance of yours and the Committee's regulations, this point they went on and the correspondence came to a severe Resolution of censure of the late Board materialised, but when it came before the whole Court it was over ruled by 12 to 7 and ordered to be reconsidered, when we were in hopes that from the little propriety, the unjustness and hastiness of the conduct, it would have not passed, but be held. The 28th you carried it by a great majority and two days afterwards those who supported you, I mean 4 of the members having seen Lord North, Secretary, turned sides and then the resolution was confirmed.'⁹⁶ On 30 May 1776 Sykes reported the undisputed victory of the supporters of Hastings who had turned out in majority. 'My dear friend, every nerve has been stretched, every degree of assiduity and attention has been exerted for you by your friends.' But for Kantababu the news was still gloomy, 'I have taken an infinite deal of pains to explain that affairs of Cantoo's lands and the renting farms but it has very little influence over those who stand rewarded by contracts. I fear from this and other circumstances, Poor Contoo will be involved with a set of people who will injure a very deserving man. I have got now before me the Majority's charges and your replies, but I find you defend the charge against everyman.'⁹⁷ The all clear sign was sent by Sykes on 31 October 1776. Informing that the charges against Hastings have been diverted after great effort, he requested Hastings not to resign under any circumstance for his own good and those of his friends. 'Macleane and G. Vansittart will write to you the particulars of the negotiations, the Terms such as they are, I doubt if their being preserved or you

⁹⁵Revenue Department Proceedings of 18th June 1776, p. 1848-1849.

⁹⁶British Museum. Add. Mss. 29137, f. 142.

⁹⁷Brit. Museum. Add. Mss. 29137, f. 203-206.

and Cantoo kept from insult. G. Vansittart, Maclean and Elliot with Palk and self are the persons who have adopted their plan for you'.....'I fear Cantoo will be involved by the dislikes of Clavering etc. may have conceived against him. Leave him in as happy a situation as possible.'⁹⁸

The Terms as communicated by Sykes were settled on behalf of Hastings. L. Maclean in a long letter reported the full story of the negotiations with Lord North as also the details of the terms of settlement. The four definite points agreed were :—

1. All the friends of Hastings dismissed for their attachment to him were returned. This brought back John Stewart, Playdell, Nathaniel Middleton and Fred Stewart.

2. All the Blackmen dismissed were restored. This brought back Raja Rajballabh, Kamuluddin, Dullol Roy and Gangagovind Singh.

3. It was decided that henceforth service would be on merit and in future the friends of Hastings would be entitled to them as usual with others.

4. Mr. Hastings shall be well received on return and that nobody in the present service should be displaced.'⁹⁹

The last clause probably saved Kantababu. This was a very important tactical gain for Hastings who emerged out of the recent struggle a much stronger man. By 29 March 1777 all the persons whose names came up in the compromise terms were put into office except Raja Rajballabh. Hastings was not at all happy and was still contemplating resignation and departure from Bengal. The solicitousness of Sykes and his deep concern for Kantababu stand out as remarkable. He wrote on 29 March 1777, 'I fear Cantoo will suffer much from the spirit of the Party, you must place him somewhere, that he may enjoy what he has, in Peace and Quietness.' Then again a month later on 26 April 1777, 'Leave Cantoo in as comfortable a situation as possible'.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸Ibid., f. 421-422.

⁹⁹Ibid., (L. Maclean to Hastings, Portsmouth 10th November 1776.)
Add. Mss. 29137, f. 441-457.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., Add. Mss. 29138, f. 280-281 and 352-353.

The tumultuous situation of the year between August 1776 and August 1777 needs to be described if not for the sake of knowledge as it has been related by so many scholars in their different books, but for continuity. These twelve months were fateful for the Governor and most critical for his banian. The Board of Directors of the East India Company, Lord North and his ministers and the shareholders of the Company created a situation which to say the least was most dramatic. On 9 May 1776 the Directors resolved by eleven votes to ten to recall both Hastings and Barwell. The majority was led by Gregory, Nandakumar's English agent; but on 18 May a proprietors' meeting had immediately reversed their decision by a triumphant majority of 107. This settled the mind of Hastings who wrote to Vansittart, 'I will stay here, dead or alive, till I am dismissed in form.' The struggle in the Governor General's Council continued.

By July both Clavering and Monson were absent, being ill. In August, Monson announced his resignation. In September, General Clavering sent out his resignation also, though he hid it from his colleagues. On 25 September 1776, Monson died and was buried in the South Park Street cemetery, putting an end to the rule of the Majority. Hastings now carried everything before him using his casting vote as frequently as it was necessary. The passing of the land reforms by such a manoeuvre deeply hurt Clavering and Francis, who wrote to their powerful friends back home. On 14 June 1777 Francis hurriedly recalled General Clavering who had gone down the river to recover his health, and informed him that news was circulating that Hastings had resigned. In the Council of the 19 June 1777 Hastings learned what his private letters had already told him, that Sir John Clavering was empowered to succeed him as Governor General. On the next day, Friday, the 20 June, General Clavering wrote a letter to 'Warren Hastings Esquire' asking him to surrender the key of the Treasury and the Fort by noon. Hastings immediately issued orders everywhere that no other orders but his should be ever considered. The whole country was aghast. The shops and bazars were all closed and the streets had a deserted look. Later however Francis induced Clavering to agree to accept the interpretation of the judges which went against them. On Monday, 23 June, Hastings and Barwell held a meeting of the Council and resolved that Clavering's illegalities had vacated his membership of the Council. Only on the 25 June the full Council met with Francis acting as the mediator.

On 8 August 1777 Hastings was married for the second time to divorcee Marian Imhoff. Both Clavering and Francis were present during the ceremony trying to prove that their opposition was not personal. A few days later, on the third fatal Saturday (on the first died Nandakumar and Col. Monson on the second) of the 30 August 1777, Clavering breathed his last, leaving instructions that Hastings should not be informed till he was buried. Francis alone among the Councillors walked in the procession behind the bier..¹⁰¹

So the Majority which had wielded so much power for the last three years was completely gone. Two of them died in course of a year leaving Philip Francis as the sole opposer of Hastings' policies. The organisation set up by Nandakumar was also lost after his death leaving the opposition poorer.

With the death of Clavering, Hastings became powerful again. Raja Rajballabh was reinstated to the post of Roy Royan in April 1777. The Court of Directors agreed to many of the suggestions made by Hastings earlier, though sometimes with rather funny results. Desirous of a strong Nawab as the Subahdar of Bengal, Hastings had in 1775 recommended the reinstatement of Nawab Mir Kasim. This was then severely objected to by the Majority. Now with the Majority gone the Court sent orders approving of the reinstatement of Nawab Mir Kasim, the only difficulty was that the Nawab had died in utter poverty two years ago in 1777.

In the Hastings' Oriental language papers there is a long had written report in Bengali about the Maratha power. The handwriting is very much like Kantababu. The report is undated and unsigned, only having in the corner a number and a word which can be translated as 'the four annas list'.* It can be therefore assumed that this was either the fourth communication from Kantababu or a quarter of the report that he ultimately sent to the Governor. This intelligence report of the Maratha movement of troops leads one to believe that Hastings might have had some knowledge of the language. A simple translation of the first few lines are given below.

'Intelligence received from the big and small generals of Chimanji Bapa the sectarian (cousin or nephew?) son of Maharaja Madhaji that

¹⁰¹Keith Feiling, *Warren Hastings*, p. 171-189.

* If the mark is in Persian then it would mean '10 list'.

both Bhopat Nawab Nezam Ali Khan of Hyderabad and the two Peshwas of Satara Fort and Poona have ordered Maharaja Madhaji to take Chimanji Bapa and as many soldiers as required and to find out about the invasion of the English people by probing into and finding out the exact detail. To this Maharaja Madhaji raised certain objections of argument. But as the Nawab and the Peshwa readily agreed to support him with as much power as would be necessary, Maharaja Madhaji withdrew his objections. Chiman has a very good troop of 12 thousand strong. They have started with more or less 25 thousand soldiers in the month of Jaistha towards Ratanpoor. Bimbaji the Raja of Sripur by his own strength is stationed at 6 miles south of Ratanpoor. Bimbaji had also been to Raipur for negotiations.'—etc. etc.¹⁰²

Even from this short extract it is not difficult to find the importance of the news. It cannot be said for certain how long Hastings used Kantababu for diplomatic work, but with the other evidences that are found it may be said that Hastings utilised the services of Kantababu at least in relation to the Marathas and Chait Singh. Some payment was also made for the secret service. The reason for considering that the payment was somehow related to the news about the Marathas is because the payment was made on 26 May 1777. 'On account Secret Service (June A/c) paid Cantoo Baboo as per Order of the Hon'ble Governor General, Dated 26th May 1777, Gold Mohurs 100=Sicca Rs. 1600=Current Rs. 1856.'¹⁰³

The success of the diplomacy is also evident from the accounts. The Government rented a house for three months, April to June, 1777 at Rs. 100 per month for the Maratha Vakeel, Benaram Pundit and actually paid Rs. 324, which signifies that the Maratha Vakeel stayed for three months and a week.¹⁰⁴ Kantababu was therefore, it seems, deputed to get Benaram Pundit to Calcutta which assignment he fulfilled creditably besides getting a lot of information about the Maratha troop movement.

From 1778 onwards the prestige of Kantababu steadily increased. This will be evident from several Persian letters. Shambhunath was an Agent of Chait Singh of Benaras and his mother. He informed Maharaj

¹⁰²British Museum. Add. Mss. 29195, f. 86. (Photograph of a part of this document is given at the end of the book).

¹⁰³IOR. Bengal Ledger and Journals. Vol. I. Range 176. Journal of 1777-78, p. 48.

¹⁰⁴Ibid. p. 90.

Misra, presumably an officer of Chait Singh that the Governor General's attempt to appoint an officer of the Company to take charge of Chait Singh's forces have been foiled by Francis and Fowke. This letter was intercepted by the Company's intelligence and brought back to the Governor. Shambhunath wrote, 'General Coote who set out for Bengal six months ago will arrive in course of the month. The affairs of Kantababu are as formerly. The Governor General makes pretences for not answering Raja Chait Singh's letter received by him.'¹⁰⁵ It is to be noted that of the five persons mentioned in the letter Kantababu was the only Indian.

The Court intrigues which were prevalent for ever tried to enlist the support of Dewan Krisnakanta on their side.¹⁰⁶ Munny Begum in her letter dated 9 November 1778 informed the Governor General that she had taken the full responsibility of instructing Sadru'l Haq Khan as to his duty. 'Just now she again invited Sadru'l Haq Khan,' writes Munny Begum using the passive third person as was the fashion of the day, 'and exhorted him to perform his duties with firmness so that no one might find fault with him. She also asked him to consult personally with her when he should want to do so. Diwan Kishan Kanta was present when she spoke to Sadru'l Haq Khan. Assures the Governor General that the well-wisher of the one will undoubtedly be the well-wisher of the other and hopes that the attitude will tend to augment their good-will and thwart the scheme of designing men.'¹⁰⁷ The presence of Kantababu when Munny Begum spoke to Sadru'l Haq Khan denotes the prestige and confidence he commanded at the Court.

The years 1777, 1778 and 1779 were difficult years for Kantababu. The Governor being continually embarrassed by Kantababu's Farms at the Court of Directors, naturally grew cold towards his banian. The dispute of the Farms, he might have feared would create fresh complications for him. He had delayed the reinstatement of Rajballabh till 1777 in spite of the several entreaties of his banian. Rajballabh was a well known friend of Kantababu. Now Hastings received the news of Reza Khan joining the otherside. This made him extremely restless as he felt that his banian as a friend of Mohammed Reza

¹⁰⁵Calendar of Persian Records, Vol. V. No. 854 dated 31 March 1778 TR 13, p. 5. No. 2.

¹⁰⁶Ibid. No. 1120 OR 72.

¹⁰⁷Calendar of Persian Records, Vol. V. No. 1185 OR 103; AR 4, p. 33.

Khan, may leak out information. In a letter to George Vansittart on 12 March 1777, he was extremely disturbed at the news that Reza Khan had submitted a memorial to his enemies. He writes, 'In all this time I said very little to any of my own people. Cantoo I always considered as a friend of Md. R. C. and Charterjee an intriguer. At last I mentioned it to the latter, with my desire to get at the bottom of this mysterious business. He said he had long heard of it and that he would endeavour to get a copy of the Memorials.'¹⁰⁸ This letter helps to clear a lot of problems.

In the three years under review Kantababu practically stopped all acquisitions of property and did not present the deeds for registration even when the negotiations were complete. This resulted in a spate of acquisitions in 1781-1782 when the cloud of misunderstanding between him and the Governor finally blew over. Kantababu was deeply hurt being forced to curb his financial growth. He might have felt, that but for the Governor General's lack of support, he could have amassed a larger fortune, particularly when the Governor allowed Gangagovind Singh and Raja Debi Singh to increase their wealth without any hindrance. It is perhaps because of this that even after 1780 when their relation became normal again the Governor and his banian are found to be strictly official in their dealings. From 1782 Kantababu became more interested in his religious pursuits and spent more time in Cossimbazar away from the Governor General. The years between 1777 and 1779 created this coolness between the Governor General and his banian. Putting the Pargana of Baharbund under a *Sezawal* in the years 1778 and 1779 must also have hurt Kantababu immensely, though the *Sezawal* however proved to be a failure. Kantababu came forward with great astuteness and offered to take the estate on a permanent lease, which offer was accepted by the Council on 20 October 1779. The Sanad recites Baharbund, Bhiturbund and Gayabari to be included in the grant. The unanimous resolution was signed by Hastings, Barwell, Francis, Wheler and Coote.¹⁰⁹ As nothing is heard of the salt cases that were lodged against the Government, after the betterment of relations between Hastings and Kantababu, it may be presumed that these cases were probably settled out of Court, at least Hastings would have easily persuaded Kantababu not to press them.¹¹⁰ Hastings is found in 1780

¹⁰⁸British Museum. Add. Mss. 48370, ff. 50.

¹⁰⁹Bengal District Records. Rangpur Vol. I. pp. 25, 26, and 86.

¹¹⁰Revenue Department Proceedings of 14th April 1778, p. 2145-2154.

taking interest in the salt disputes between Kantababu and Archdekin¹¹¹ and Krishnananda Sircar, and though the Calcutta Committee of Revenue had predominantly favoured the claims of Krishnananda Sircar, yet now the matter was taken over by the Supreme Board and was referred to the Superintendent of the Khalsa Records, with directions to report upon it as was usual in cases of Appeal.¹¹² On 9 December 1783 a formal resolution of the Board closed the matter as being extremely complicated.¹¹³

From 1781 till Hastings' departure in 1785, there are few references which give some idea about the activities of Kantababu. Only the Bijaygarh affair connected with the Benaras insurrection of Chait Singh stands out as the culmination of Kantababu's career as the banian of the Governor General. His courage, consideration and sense of duty mark him out as the remarkable man he was. As a full chapter will be devoted to the 'Narrative of Krishnakanta Nandy on the affairs of Bijoygarh' here only passing remarks may be made in relation to his standing with the Governor General, before and after those shocking incidents.

When the trouble of Chait Singh reached a point and it became necessary for the Governor General to station himself at the Chunar Fort, Kantababu also accompanied him. It is evident from Hastings' 'Narrative of the Insurrection of Banaris' that Kantababu was entrusted with the duty of negotiating with the Raja for a peaceful solution of the problem. In spite of the several discussions that Kantababu had with Mirza Ali Beg, the vakeel of Chait Singh, Hastings never believed that the Raja had any other intention but to gain time for preparation.¹¹⁴ This undoubtedly led him to issue orders to William Markham, Resident of Benaras to arrest the Raja on 15 August 1781. The arrested Raja sent a message to Kantababu from his confinement and also petitioned to Hastings. Kantababu must have gone to see the interned Raja in response to his message of the day before, otherwise the abduction of Kantababu would not have been possible. Hastings informed this incident to his wife from Chunar on 24 September only when he learned that the Maulavi had been killed

¹¹¹Home Dept. Law Proceedings of 26th June 1781, p. 223-248.

¹¹²Revenue Depart. Proceedings of 30th November 1779, p. 3808-3815.

¹¹³Ibid. of 9th December 1783, p. 2623-2660.

¹¹⁴Warren Hastings, Governor General, Narrative of the Insurrection of Banaris, p. 33-34.

and Kantababu and Mr. Barnett had been released. Kantababu however arrived before his master as he was completing the letter.¹¹⁵

After the flight of Chait Sing his mother Panna who was besieged in the Bijoygarh fort by the army of Major Popham refused to surrender the fort until Kantababu would be present to safeguard her honour. She probably believed that the Governor General's native banian's presence would ensure her safety. What followed was a tale of horror and cowardice. Under Popham's order a rampart was blown open unknown to Kantababu and against the trend of the discussion. Kantababu at the risk of his personal safety tried to save the honour of the ladies of Chait Singh in that black winter night. Though frail in health and weak from lack of food for a whole day and night he climbed the steep fort several times and at last succeeded in maintaining the honour of the women to a certain extent. Accompanied by Major Scott, the only soldier with some humanity and reason, Kantababu brought the ladies to Benaras himself. It was only after he was able to put the ladies into a house, he felt his duty done.

The next action of Hastings puts the whole matter in a different perspective. On the 10 January 1785, only a few days before his final departure Hastings bestowed upon his banian a Jageer estate of the estimated value of Rs. 10000, in villages situated in the 'Pargana of Khureed' of the Gazeepur District in United Province. The grant was an '*altumgha inam*' or perpetual donation upon his Dewan as a provision for his religious observances, and was to be enjoyed by him generation after generation. This act could be and some times has been interpreted as the parting gift of the Governor General to his Dewan. If it had been so, nothing would have seemed more natural. A life long service deserved such a recognition. But no record of the grant was made in the Government Revenue offices in Calcutta, and it appears to have been conferred in secret and informal manner, without the sanction or knowledge of the Council whose concurrence was necessary for the validity of the grant. Ultimately it was declared that this unregistered and informal grant conferred on Kantababu would have retrospective effect from the commencement of the year 1189 Fasli or 1781. As Kantababu did not obtain the actual possession of the 'Jageer' in 1781, Raja Maheep-narayan did not demand a corresponding remission in his fixed

¹¹⁵Sydney C. Grier, *The Letters of Warren Hastings to his Wife*, p. 160-161.

annual revenue, which he did from 1784.¹¹⁶ This fact proves that the possession of the property was not held by Kantababu in 1781, that is, before the Bijoygarh episode but at any time between 1782 and 1784. The grant and the manner in which it was given to Kantababu arouse the suspicion whether the Jageer was a prize for keeping his mouth shut about the affairs of that accursed fort. The attempt to prove that the grant was made prior to the sack of Bijoygarh makes such an apprehension quite plausible.

'The Narrative' remained in the undated political papers of Hastings, who never tried to make any use of it during the Impeachment. The Managers were also not aware of its existence as that would have given them a handle to pursue the Bijoygarh matter further.

Certain difference between the approach of the Governor and his banian stands out glaring. Kantababu did not share his master's suspicion about Chait Singh. He therefore never hesitated to visit Chait Singh in his palace at Benaras (Shiwala Ghat) for negotiations and most probably met his mother Panna there. Even the day before the arrest, Kantababu negotiated with the vakeel of Chait Singh and returned to his house in Benaras. He responded immediately to the letter of Chait Singh from captivity and went to meet him, when Chait Singh effected his escape and in the process carried away Kantababu also with him. Kantababu had to accompany the ladies to the Bijoygarh fort and was later released. So his period of captivity was from 16th August 1781 to 22nd September 1781.¹¹⁷ In spite of the killing of the Maulavi at Bijoygarh, Kantababu seems to have been well treated, otherwise he would not have agreed to go to Bijoygarh again, neither would have Rani Panna asked for his presence so that her honour and dignity did not suffer.

These factors explain why after the tragic circumstances of Bijoygarh, Hastings felt inclined to satisfy Kantababu with the gift of Jageer, the actual year of which he kept secret. This was perhaps Hastings' only direct gift to Kantababu in the course of their acquaintance of 25 years. Kantababu undoubtedly feared that this unregistered deed would land

¹¹⁶Wilton Oldham Ed. Historical and Statistical Memoir of the Ghazee poor District (1876) Part II. p. 56-57.

¹¹⁷Brit. Mus., Popham to Hastings, Camp Patteeta, 23rd September. 1781, Add. Mss. 29150, f. 404.

him into difficulty. So on the 1 May 1793 he created a Registered Religious Trust ¹¹⁸ converting the property to an endowment for the upkeep and expenses of Sri Sri Laxminarayan thakur, the deity presented by Rani Panna to Kantababu during the holocaust of Bijoygarh. Kantababu established the deity in his home at Cossimbazar and worshipped it as his family deity. The Jageer however was not entered in the books of the Government till April 1794 which was after Kantababu's death in January of that year.

Hastings never mentioned Kantababu in his correspondence with others while he was the Governor General, except during the Bijoygarh incident. This was one of those rare occasions when Hastings mentions 'Contoo' twice in his letter to Mrs. Hastings. A natural surmise follows. Kantababu may have endeared himself to Mrs. Hastings through his devotion and efficiency. Otherwise there would have been no necessity of Hastings mentioning him in the private correspondence to his wife.

When Hastings was trying to explain the duties of the 'Banian', in a letter to Sir Elijah Impey on 12 October 1774 he was probably thinking of Kantababu. 'You may consider such a servant only as a steward, or one who you may usefully employ in providing common necessities for you. But banians are more than that; they are the people through whom every concern of whatever nature passes to their masters' and one could best be called simply 'your minister'.¹¹⁹ Kantababu was considered however to be the favourite of the Governor. No accusations of Hastings could be considered complete without a share of Kantababu in it. No doubt Burke said during the impeachment, 'whoever has heard of Mr. Hastings' name, with any knowledge of Indian connections, has heard of his banian Cantoo Baboo'.¹²⁰

In spite of this close association Kantababu did not accompany Hastings outside Bengal after the Bijoygarh affair. Possibly his increasing age (he was about 62 years old) and failing health restricted him to stay in Calcutta and look after the accounts and the household of his master. A lurking suspicion however cannot be ruled out that the Bijoygarh

¹¹⁸The Religious Trust Deed of 1st May 1793, Balia.

¹¹⁹Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29125, f. 365.

¹²⁰The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke (the Baronet of Huntingdon Edition) Volume X. Monday, 18th February 1788. Opening Speech—Third day of Impeachment, p. 19.

experience was too much for him; so he excused himself from following Hastings when he went to Ajodhya or to other places.

There is enough evidence to prove that Kantababu scrupulously maintained the accounts of Hastings, looked after his house even after his departure in 1785, collected the rents and made payments to the household. The way Kantababu kept the documents, particularly the deeds of loan given by Hastings to other Europeans was efficient. He would write in Bengali at the back of every document the name of the person who took the loan, the amount of money given, the date and the purpose of the loan; remarking some times whether the batta or interest would be credited to the account of Hastings. Unfortunately the earlier accounts are not available. It is presumed that during the days of the Majority they were destroyed under the advice of Hastings. Even then, the stray references that are prevalent in the Hastings' Papers in the British Museum, collectively present an illuminating picture. The earliest of these documents is dated 5th April 1762 and the latest 25th July 1782. After the departure of Hastings to England, Larkins was entrusted to the duty of getting the final accounts from Kantababu. All these when arranged chronologically show the dependence of Hastings on his banian in his personal matters. The comments made by Kantababu in a few of the documents in Bengali are also informative. The private books of accounts of Kantababu show the income and expenditure he had to incur for the house that Hastings left in his care.

The chronological table.¹²¹

- (A) Hastings gives a loan to Herve Dubois on 5th April 1762 witnessed by Krisnakanta Das. Kantababu remarks after writing the date and name in Bengali that the document of loan which was of 1000 Sicca Rupees had been left in his custody.
- (B) Hastings gives a loan to Robert Bellamy on 25th September 1764 witnessed by Krisnachandra Das (Kanta's brother, working as understudy while Kanta was at Puri) and Geo Ribeiro was of 2000 Arcot Rupees.
- (C) A loan to Thomas Earles given on 10th February 1774 for S^a Rs. 2000. A note in Bengali to the same effect.

¹²¹British Museum. Bills and Accounts. Add. Mss. 29227. A-f. 20-21, B-f. 29, C-f. 171, D-f. 174, E-f. 193, F-f. 228, G-f. 230, H-f. 260, I-f. 289 and J-f. 306.

- (D) A note of hand for Philip Herberts on 4th March 1774 for 1000 Arcot Rupees. Kantababu after noting the date in Bengali, writes the name as 'Ouibutt Shaheb' then calculates that 1000 Arcot Rupees were equivalent to Sicca Rupees 931 to be paid by Gokul Sen.
- (E) A receipt of loan from Valentine Dubois of 22nd April 1774 for Rs. 1000 (presumably Arcot) has the date, name and amount written in Bengali.
- (F) Another receipt from Valentine Dubois of 23rd August 1774 for Rs. 1000 on account of T. S. Hancock. Kantababu remarks that 'Dubai Shaheb' owes to Mr. Hancock's account Sicca Rupees 1080.
- (G) A third receipt from Valentine Dubois on 16th September 1774 for Rs. 600 also on account of Mr. Hancock has a similar transcription in Bengali with the remark that the account was in Arcot Rupees.
- (H) A receipt from George Marsley to Mr. Hancock and countersigned by Hastings on 21st December 1774 bears the interesting additional remark that the payment was made to 'Maalee Shaheb' in 68 gold Sicca Mohurs and Rs. 12. The Gold Mohur price being Rs. 16 per mohur, Marsley received the total sum of Sicca Rs. 1100.
- (I) A receipt in an European language (Dutch—?) from J. H. .H Damins for borrowing Arcot Rs. 2000 on account of Mr. Hancock through Mr. Hastings on 24th January 1775. Taking no liberty with European names Kantababu makes an elaborate transcription in Bengali, writing the name as 'Ja. Ga. Damons.'
- (J) A note of hand from John Davis to Hastings for Arcot Rupees 5000 dated 24th February 1775. In the transcription, Kantababu writes the date in English and mistakenly or not, writes 24th July 1775.
- (K) Hastings does not make the payment himself nor does he instruct Kantababu to do so. He orders Hancock to pay Davis on 24th February 1775. The order is transcribed into Bengali and preserved by Kantababu, obviously for balancing the accounts at a subsequent period.

- (L) On 1st May 1775 Hastings writes to Hancock, 'I desire you will lend the amount of the accompanying bill to Mr. Johnson C Rs. 18,639-9-9.' Kantababu after his Bengali transcription remarks that the amount was in the account of Hancock and that the sum was actually Sicca Rupees 10,000. This tendency of Kantababu to account all payments ultimately into Sicca Rupees, shows the prevalent system of work.
- (M) A receipt from Moses Underwood Mark for Rs. 200 paid by Mr. Hancock on account of Mr. Hastings on 14th August 1775. The note of Kantababu gives additional information. He writes that the amount would be considered as a part of the interest due to Hastings, who is referred to as 'Bara Shaheb.' He also adds that this payment of 200 Arcot Rupees to Moses Underwood was an 'Inam' or gift of Hastings for certain services rendered.
- (N) This is that extremely important Pay Order from Hastings to Kantababu dated 16th August 1775. 'To Cantoo Baboo—pay to Kishen Jiwun Neace Lauker the sum of One Thousand Sicca Rupees on my account. Warren Hastings.' In the Bengali transcription the date is 17th August, the name is Krisna Jiban Nyasandagar who is the inhabitant of Baranagar, the payment made.
- (O) The next bill is rather confusing. It is a receipt from Hastings to Hancock to pay Mr. Dare Arcot Rupees 3000. Kantababu making the note on 15th November remarks that the payment on account of Hastings was made by Hancock to 'Mr. Der' of the sum of Arcot Rupees 3000 in the account of Mr. Ducarel of the same amount of money. There are more such rather confusing documents.
- (P) Another interesting bill is the one in which Krisnachandra Chattopadhyaya, a servant of Hastings and assistant to Kantababu lends Rs. 10,000 to Bhawani Churn Surmah, repayable in one year. The document is undated, possesses no remark but the amount is very high. The identification of this Surmah will surely open the gate of many surmises. It will be an exercise to know whether the Brahmin was in any way related to the banian of Francis.¹²²

¹²²British Museum, Bills and Accounts, Add. Mss. 29227, K-f. 308, L-f. 330, M-f. 365, N-f. 367-68, O-f. 379, 429, 431 & 595; P-f. 477.

(Q) Then there is a large gap of time. There is only one more order amongst these bills, 'Cantoo Baboo—pay to the bearer one thousand sicca Rupees on my account, Fort William, 15th July 1782, Warren Hastings.' Along with it a memo attached, 'Received the contents : J. C. Harrington attorney for Lt. Wm. Mc Guire dated 25th July 1782.' Kantababu's note enters the payment on 27th July 1782. The payment was made through Ramlochan Chattopadhaya.¹²³

So this payment seems to be of a special nature. Kantababu as it seems did not look after the bills after 1775. This was because he was entrusted more responsible and important work. Only in 1782 he once again makes this payment and notes it for the last time.

Throughout the accounts of Hastings there is no mention of any amount being paid to Kantababu except the 100 Gold Mohurs for his diplomatic duties. In the Durbar accounts there is a mention in the account of June 1780, 'Paid cash to Banian, Allowance for June—Rs. 90.' This item, though intermittently, is repeated in July, August and November of 1780, in April and May of 1781, in July 1783 and lastly in September 1784, it is not at all clear whether this was a payment made to Kantababu. The amount is so meagre that it cannot be considered to be the full payment made to Kantababu. Sometimes 'Banians' or 'Banian and etc.' has also been written but the sum of Rs. 90 per month is constant. This amount was perhaps paid to others as the August 1780 account recites 'Paid cash Banians and their allowances.' These men were certainly the junior staff. A payment made to Whelers' banian in this account leads to such a possibility.¹²⁴ This account however gives many informations. One of the most curious is that in March 1782 Hastings gave to 80 Brahmins pairs of shawls which cost the exchequer S^r Rs. 4692-15-6.¹²⁵ This episode bears strong resemblance to Kantababu's payment to the Brahmins. It is not known whether the function was performed in Benaras or Calcutta, but the purpose was to celebrate the victory of Hastings over Chait Singh. The method of thanksgiving is so Baisnab in outlook that it is difficult to check the temptation of remarking, that this was done under the influence of Kantababu.

¹²³Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29228, f. 442-443. Ramlochan was the Sircar of Mr. Hastings (See Add. Mss. 29116, ff. 147-153.)

¹²⁴Brit. Mus., Durbar Accounts, Add. Mss. 29092, ff. 5, 6, 8, 15, 28, 31, 112, 104 and 162.

¹²⁵Ibid., Add. Mss. 29092, f. 54.

Now a sample of the way in which the household accounts of Hastings were kept may be shown. As the accounts followed the same pattern month after month any one month may be considered to be representative.

January 1783		Charges General
Hooka	—	Rs. 15- 6-3
Maussals	—	„ 69-10-6
Garden	—	„ 21- 1-0
House	—	„ 26- 4-0
Charges extraordinary	—	„ 2499- 6-3
Allepore Garden	—	„ 865-14-6
Musicians	—	„ 1166- 6-6
Pensions	—	„ 70- 4-0
Donations	—	„ 158- 8-6
Office	—	„ 2771- 6-3
Boats	—	„ 144- 7-3
Elephants	—	„ 988- 2-3
Horses	—	„ 1374- 8-0
Carriages	—	„ 226- 0-3
Cows	—	„ 44-10-6
Medicines	—	„ 421- 1-3
Servant's Wages	—	„ 1049-15-3
Bazar Expenses	—	„ 5570- 9-3
Mrs. Hastings' Charges General	—	„ 3974-10-9
Grand Total		24950- 9-0' ¹¹⁶

The division of the heads of expenses follow the pattern of the accounts of Kantababu himself, who divided the heads under the various departments called '*Khanas*.'

The accounts presented are a combination of the English and the old Muslim systems. The heads of expenses generally follow the old divisions such as *Bindah-khana* (Tobacco, Hooka etc.) *Massaulkhana* (lighting, oil, lamps etc.), *Pheel Khana* (elephants) *Astaubalkhana* (horses), *Gowkhana* (cows), *Daway Khana* (medicines), *Nackar Khana* (musicians) along with 'charges extraordinary', 'garden', 'office', 'Donations', 'Pensions', 'Bazar Expenses' and 'Mrs. Hastings' charges General.'

Kantababu continued to look after Hastings' account after his departure from India. William Larkins was generally in charge of Hastings' affairs in India and promised to wind up all the outstanding matters. On 27 August 1784 he drew up a list of sums comprising the

¹¹⁶Brit. Mus., Official account Books, Add. Mss. 29089, f. 126.

amount of 'Doubtful Debts,' from the books of Hastings. Among others there can be found a loan to Kamaluddin Khan given between January and May 1777 amounting to Rs. 9579-4-3, one to Valentine Dubois amounting to Rs. 2808, and to Phillip Herbert of Rs. 1080. The loan to James Gould amounting to over a lakh of Rupees was still outstanding as was the one paid to Stewart and Company of Rs. 42608. The account of James Edward Colebrook shows, due from him for money advanced by the Governor General, of which 'Cauntoo paid Rs. 3920' in 1781-82 and Major Sands paid Rs. 4384-8-0 in 1784-85.¹²⁷ It is not understood whether the amount was advanced by the two gentlemen to Colebrook or paid to Hastings' account on his behalf. This shows that both direct and indirect methods of advances were resorted to, which however only added to the general confusion.

Larkins' letter to Warren Hastings of 29 March 1785 carried the copy of 'Cauntoo's cash account of October, November and December 1784 and January 1785.'¹²⁸ Larkins wrote to Hastings on 20 July 1785, 'Although I have ordered Cauntoo to look through the Bengal cash accounts with great care and to extract for me, whatever sums were paid by him to those Gentlemen who brought out Packets over land to you, yet he has not been able to ascertain any but the sum of one thousand Sicca Rupees paid in January to Mr. Church for his passage from Bombay to Bengal.' Larkins' letter was accompanied by 'an account Sales of Sundry piece goods' and 'the list of valuables sold by Cauntoo.' The Cash accounts of October, November and December 1784 and January 1785, which are with the Hastings' Papers establish Kantababu as a perfect and expert accountant.¹²⁹

The details of the sales of sundry piece goods sold by Kantababu are :—

'Piece Goods.

Seerbund	one	—Rs.	15
Mulmull	6 pieces	— „	98
-do-	1 „	— „	275
-do-	12 „	— „	264
Kingkhab Pyejamah	1 piece	— „	20

¹²⁷Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29229, f. 73-74.

¹²⁸Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29229 (Bills and Accounts Vol. III.), f. 73-74.

¹²⁹Ibid., ff. 181, 215-218, 260 and for the accounts see f. 249-256.

Aul Khaylack	1 piece	— „	15
1 Khelat containing.	7 picces	— „	475
1 -do- „	7 pieces	— „	325
1 -do- „	3 pieces	— „	36
Cellah „	3 pieces	— „	45
Mulmull	1 piece	— „	25
1 Hooka with rubies etc.		— „	150
Total Sicca			Rs. 1,944*

Errors Excepted. Signed W. M. Larkins, 1st August 1785'.¹³⁰

On 29 March 1785 Larkins wrote to Hastings on the subject of his pensioners, 'Cauntoo has not yet furnished me with the Origin etc. of your pensioners, my promise on that head therefore remains yet unperformed, but as the Fox will most probably be in England before the Hinchinbrooke if she should not arrive in even the next month, I am not very anxious to get either that or your account ready by this, indeed that has not been within my power, for the Writer which I still keep for your business has been almost wholly occupied as yet in attending to the deliveries of your effects to Mr. Bondfield and to the payment of those demands which have been discharged, which since my return to Calcutta have amounted to no less a sum than C. Rs. 1,89176-2-3'.¹³¹ Kantababu did however submit the list of pensioners which included many of the old servants of Hastings or if they were dead the pension was paid to their parents. Hastings' list of pensioners submitted by Kantababu included amongst others Mrs. Vernet, the wife of the Dutch Factor, who as the head of The Dutch Factory at Cossimbazar gave Kantababu Rs. 3000 in 1756 to bail out Hastings from the Nawab's prison. The list also included a gentleman of 93 and a blind singer whom Hastings picked up from the road and brought him home. At least upto October 1789 all the pensioners were paid by Larkins. After Larkins left for England the payments became the responsibility of Chapman who paid all the others except two whose payments became the responsibility of Kantababu. So from November 1789 Kantababu paid Joyananda Saw Arcot Rs. 30 and Doondy Rs. 5 totalling to Arcot Rupees 35*or Current Rs. 32-9-3. These payments were continuously made by Kantababu from November on account of October 1789 upto February 1792, after which either the pensioners died or some other arrangement was made. There is no reference to this account after March 1792. The other pensioners however went on receiving the usual pension.¹³²

* the total should be Rs. 1,743.

¹³⁰Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29229, ff. 286-288.

¹³¹Ibid., ff. 296-300.

¹³²Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29230, ff. 568-591.

As the Banian of Hastings, Kantababu looked after the house of Hastings. Before the departure of the Governor he presented the account for his perusal. This account was a part of Kantababu's Cash Book. As the heading is in singular number there can be no doubt that only one house has been referred to. The most confusing part of the account is the income side. Who paid the sums of money received by Kantababu? was it paid by Hastings himself or from some other source? Kantababu generally explicit in his descriptions did not disclose the sources. For instance the payment of Rs. 400 made on account of 'the house of Barashaheb' was made on 28 June 1784 (17th Ashar 1191) by Ramananda Surma by paying 25 Gold Mohurs. Similarly the next day the payment for expenses of 'the house of Barashaheb' was made to the same Ramananda Surma who was paid $19\frac{1}{2}$ Gold Mohurs and Rs. 13 for a total of Rs. 325. On 3 July 1784 the same person was paid for the expense of the house 3 Gold Mohurs and Rs. 2 to constitute a total of Rs. 50, but on the next day Ramprosad was paid again on account of the house Rs. 25 constituted by $1\frac{1}{2}$ Gold Mohurs and Re. 1. The big payment of 13 July 1784 was made by Ramananda Roy by 100 Gold Mohurs, while Parbati Chowdhury repaid a loan of Rs. 16. This Parbati Chowdhury was a Mohorar (Kanta writes Mohouree which is the colloquial term) of Kantababu, appointed to look after the house of Hastings. Parbati was paid on account of his salary etc. Rs. 120. The November account is not at all clear. It can best be interpreted as a part of the salary paid from the Khalisha and adjusted against the taxes to be paid for Governor's house, the sum involved was Rs. 850. Presumably the salary so paid and adjusted belonged to Hastings but there is no clear indication that it was. The account of 19 January again is not very easy to understand. Mahadeb Majumdar brings in the account of the Governor's house, Rs. 17833-5-3 which was immediately on the same date paid to Gourcharan Mullick satisfying his loan of Rs. 15000 and an interest of Rs. 2833-5-3. The only way to interpret this transaction is that Hastings sold his house by adjusting the value of the sale with the outstanding loan. The last entry in this account is made on 8 February 1785 showing payments which removed the debit balance leaving an income over the expenditure of Rs. 2473-12-0 only. It is not known what happened to this credit balance.¹³³

¹³³The Cash Book of Kantababu of 1191 (1784-85) entitled 'The Calcutta Account'.

1191 (1784-85) A/c Barashahab's house.

Date	Income	Expenditure
17 Ashar/28 June	Rs. 400	
18-21 Ashar/2 July		Rs. 325
24 Ashar/3 July		" 50
25-26 Ashar/4-5 July		" 25
1 Sravan/13 July	" 1616	" 120
10 Sravan/22 July		" 325
15-16 Sravan/27-28 July		" 1275
24-27 Bhadra/Sept.		" 10
5-6 Aswin/18-19 Sept.	" 192	
27-28 Aswin/9-10 Oct.		" 192
6 Agran/19 Nov.	" 850	" 850
17-19 Agran/30 Nov.		" 75
27-29 Agran/Dec.		" 26
27-29 Pous/8 January	" 35	
9 Magh/19 January	" 17,833- 5-3	" 17,833- 5-3
12 Magh/22 January	" 1,653-12-0	
26-28 Magh/8 Feb.	" 1,000- 0-0	
	Rs. 23,580- 1-3	Rs. 21,106- 5-3
	Income over	Exp. 2,473-12-0
		Rs. 23,580- 1-3

There is however only one reference to the Banian's office in the Hastings' Papers which gives an account of the Bengal Establishments during his time. This sole information enlightens that the Banian's office consisted of 2 *Duftories*, 2 peons and 1 servant, the name of the servant was 'Harry'. The Banian received from the Government all his expenses including red ink, country hides, cotton threads, brooms and Bengal papers etc.¹³⁴ It is easy to know that 'Bengal Paper' was the hand made local paper and the 'country hide' was probably used for binding purposes.

The Christmas *nazar* was generally paid by the Banian to the Governor and the other dignitaries. This being the last Christmas before Hastings' departure, Lokenathbabu also paid a *nazar* to the Governor. On 18 January 1785 (8 Magh 1191) Lokenath paid to Hastings a *nazar* of 2 gold mohurs. Kantababu paid on 22 January 1785 to Hastings and others:

(a) Warren Hastings	— 6 Gold Mohurs	i.e. Rs. 96
(b) Mani Begum	— 4 Gold Mohurs	
	and Rs. 20	" Rs. 84
(c) John Macpherson	— 2 Gold Mohurs	" Rs. 32

¹³⁴ Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29091, Bengal Establishment No. 9.

(d) Edward Fenwick, Chief of Murshidabad	— 1 Gold Mohur and Rs. 5.	„ Rs. 21
(e) Sir John D'Oyley, Resident at the Durbar	— 1 Gold Mohur	„ Rs. 16
(f) Charles Chapman, Hastings' Attorney	— 1 Gold Mohur	„ Rs. 16
(g) Charles Stewart	— 1 „ „	„ Rs. 16
(h) Major Scott (Paid twice 1 Mohur each)	— 2 „ „	„ Rs. 32
(i) Burish Crisp	— 1 „ „	„ Rs. 16
(j) John Benn	— 1 „ „	„ Rs. 16

The *nazar* to Mr. Macpherson, the acting Governor General was paid by Kantababu on 23-24 Magh 1191. Another *nazar* of 1 Gold Mohur and Rs. 5 was paid to Mr. Macpherson on the 3rd February 1785, when he called Kantababu to his presence after assuming charge. A *nazar* of one Gold Mohur and Rs. 5 was paid to John Stables who was present on the occasion. This first week of February was emotionally charged for Kantababu who makes a complete confusion of dates in his book of accounts, which were written after the departure of Hastings. Hence he bids farewell to Hastings on Sunday, meets Macpherson on 3 February Monday and then pays the Dues of the Khalsa on Baharbund on 8 February, Monday. Taking the last date to be correct, he presumably met Macpherson on Thursday the 4 February after bidding his master off in a grand style on the 3 February on board the Berrington. What little description of this farewell has spilled into the dry accounts is full of the sentiments of the moment.

Whether it was on the 2nd or the 3rd, Kantababu accompanied 'Srijut Barashaheb' upto the Bakada canal is immaterial, but the sentiment of the departure of Barashaheb was too much to bear. He returned from the canal in his own boat, which was the 'Bajra' of 20 oars. His own boatman Kanai Manjhi was at the helm. He also took out the 'pinace' (pansey) which was under the charge of Balaram Manjhi. On his return he paid both the Manjhis Rs. 6 each, the oarsmen were paid Rs. 21.¹³⁵ Thus ended the long association between an Indian from Cossimbazar and his European master. Hastings' own letter admits that Cantoo Baboo was for a space of 24 years and more engaged in his service.¹³⁶

Though Kantababu was no longer the Banian of Hastings he kept in touch with him probably through his attorneys, Chapman and

¹³⁵ The Cash Book of Kantababu of 1191 (1784-85).

¹³⁶ Brit. Mus., Add. Mss., 29202. ff. 252-258.

Imhoff. On 24 February 1789 he bought some Gold Mohurs from Delhi through Narsing, his brother, on Hastings' account, probably because it was going cheap. He bought these at the rate of Rs. 14-2-0.¹⁸⁷ As it was in Narsing's account it is not possible to know what were the total amount of gold bought or whether Hastings left any money for making such purchases. Neither it is known whether these gold mohurs could be sent to Hastings in England or were utilised to make payments on his account in India. What he did send Hastings to England on 10 April, 1789 was 5 packets of mangoes.¹⁸⁸ The cost for shipping these five packets to England was Rs. 64-8-6, the whole transaction costing Rs. 251-11-0.

The account is as follows :—

Cost of mangoes from Murshidabad	—Rs.	39- 0-0
-do- -do- Maldah	— „	30- 0-0
Cost of despatching from Maldah to Cossimbazar	— „	89- 9-6*
Cost of despatching from Cossimbazar to Calcutta (through Agradeep in Regular Service)	— „	28- 9-0
Cost of 5 packets, boat hire, payments to persons and shipping charges	— „	64- 8-6
		<hr/>
	Rs.	251-11-0

*(Cost seems to be exceptionally high compared with the other transport charges).

On putting down his office as the Banian of the Governor General in 1785 Kantababu looked after his own affairs. He got busy with his cotton goods trade which included silk and woolen cloths; managed and organised his Zemindari, established Filatures in and around Cossimbazar, keeping generally away from the administrators of Calcutta. Though he had many friends amongst the servants of the Company, he did extensive trading with the French Company through private English merchants. At this time he is alleged to be a party in the conspiracy that led to the fall of Gangagovind Singh in which almost all important personalities of the time were involved. Around 1790 he permanently retired from Calcutta and immediately became seriously ill. It was possible for him to be in Calcutta in August 1791, to discuss matters of great urgency regarding Hastings with Chapman. Charles Chapman discussed the circumstances in which Hastings needed money and was entirely satisfied with the conversation. He wrote to Hastings on 10

¹⁸⁷ The Cash Book of Kantababu of 1195 (1788-89), of 15 Falgoon or 24th February 1789.

¹⁸⁸ The Ledger of Kantababu of 1195 (1788-89), of 30 Chaitra or 10th April 1789.

August 1791, 'Your old servant Kauntoo is almost upon his last legs and has been extremely ill for some time past, so that I was not able to get sight of him, since the receipt of your letter till today. The conversation I had with him was rather satisfactory than otherwise; and should the result of it turn out as I wish, previous to the final closing of the Packet, I shall make it the subject of a separate address.' The next day Chapman was able to write, 'August 11th, Old Kauntoo has just been with me and delivered to me the enclosed draft for One thousand pounds, drawn by Mr. Setan, the Collector of Behar on Robert Hay Esq. of Diummellier, of which he humbly begs your acceptance. Take it my dear Sir, considering it, with the offering of the Pundit as a temporary supply and by the Blessings of God the first ship of the season shall carry you a further and considerable one.'¹³⁹

But Chapman's expectations were belied. Benaram Pundit died on 3 August 1792 and Kantababu did not come up with any further contributions. As Hastings became restless for money he urged Chapman for contributions but Chapman not succeeding in his endeavours only grew increasingly bitter. His letters bear the signs of his frustration and anger.

He wrote to Hastings on 15 May 1793, 'A few days ago the person whom I had deputed to Cauntoo Baboo returned and I am sorry to find from his report, a translation of which shall hereafter be sent to you, that the Old Gentleman, as pertinaciously refused to admit the responsibility for the money you were robbed of, as to receive back the trifling present he had forwarded to England, declaring that he would rather suffer death than do either. I must therefore wait your further order.'¹⁴⁰

The ledger of outstanding accounts prepared by Kantababu in 1199 or 1792-93 explains the reluctance of Kantababu for making any further contributions. The ledger shows the Rs. 10000 paid to Hastings as a contribution in the debit side, along with other debit accounts of Rs. 420-14-9 for some personal outstanding expenses of the late Governor, along with the expenses outstanding for the house of Mr. Hastings coming to Rs. 1775-4-3. The Account with the Europeans does present a dismal picture. The transactions with 26 Europeans, most of whom were Company servants resulted in the outstanding total of

¹³⁹ Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29172, ff. 293-310.

¹⁴⁰ Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29173, f. 39-41.

Rs. 2,30,000 while the income side did not touch even Rs. 20,000. Even the rental of Mr. Hastings' house was not realised and amounted to Rs. 2320.¹⁴¹ Kantababu not in a mood to incur any more loss refused further contributions to Hastings. It is rather curious that his expenditure with the Europeans reached such proportions. This matter will be discussed further in another Chapter where Kantatabu's relation with the foreigners will be taken up.

Kantababu died between the noons of 9th and 10th January 1794, which corresponded with 28th and 29th Pous which was the last day of the month and was the ninth day of the moon of 1200 B.S., at Cossimbar and was cremated there.

Chapman wrote to Hastings on 15 January 1794, 'Kantoo Baboo died a few days ago. As he was a very old servant and I trust in some instances, a good one, the intelligence of his decease will be productive of some of those sensations which I know you feel on the loss of any of those who have served you or to whom you have been long acquainted. His son, who is stiled Rajah Lokenath Nundee, informed me of the event in a letter which I received the day before yesterday.'¹⁴²

Hastings was directly informed of the sad incident by Lokenath himself in a personal letter written in Persian.¹⁴³ The official letter from Lokenath informing about the death of his father was also written in Persian on 29 January 1794.¹⁴⁴ What seems strange is that there was no reply from Hastings either to the letter of Chapman or Lokenath, neither a comment can be found in his diaries which he kept during these years. When Hastings was acquitted in 1795 news travelled to India. Mani Begum immediately sent her congratulations which was soon followed by a letter in Persian from Lokenath. Apprehending that for some reason his earlier communication might have been mislaid, Lokenath congratulated Hastings and then informed him about the death of his beloved father, Kantababu.¹⁴⁵ Once again there was neither any reply nor any comment in the diary. It seems a little strange that there is no way of knowing the feeling of Hastings at the death of his longest acquaint-

¹⁴¹ The Ledger of Kantababu of 1199 (1792-93) of Outstanding Accounts.

¹⁴² Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29173, f. 153.

¹⁴³ Ibid., No. 29205, f. 34. No. 16.

¹⁴⁴ Calendar of Persian Documents, Vol. XI, TR 37. p. 64, No. 98; AR 10, p. 29.

¹⁴⁵ Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29205, f. 34 No. 8.

tance in India. As both the letters addressed to him by 'Maharaja Lokenath' are found in the Hastings' Papers, this silence seems to be all the more bewildering.

In a few years time, however, Hastings had to invoke the name of his dead banian, in several letters. Maharaja Nabakrisna had instituted a suit against Hastings claiming that the Rs. 3,00,000 which he gave to Hastings on the eve of his departure from India was not a gift, but a loan, which Hastings had failed to repay. 'In his Bills later supported by the depositions of his servants taken in India in 1801, Nobkissen claimed that Hastings had approached him for a loan of three lakhs in July 1780. He had agreed to advance the money, which had been paid in instalments between 29 July and 12 December 1780, and Hastings had promised to give him his bond for the three lakhs. No rate of interest was fixed but Nobkissen assumed that it was the customary rate, which he described as 12%. Hastings drew up the bond and gave it to his banyan Krishna Kanta Nandy who was to hand it over when the last instalment was paid. When Nobkissen applied to Cantu for the bond, he was told that Hastings had taken it back. He heard in 1782 that Hastings had mislaid the bond but would give it to him when he found it. He tried to see Hastings about the loan on several occasions, but was excluded from the Governor General's house until he finally managed to gain admission on the eve of Hastings' departure for England in February 1785...' 'Hastings stated that the loan took place in 1783.'¹⁴⁶ On this affair Hastings wrote on 28 May 1798 from Daylesford House, 'The third and fourth allegations rest for proof upon his own word and the evidence which might have been given by Contoo Baboo, my moonshy Seddor O'Din and others who were living at the time in which his first complaints were written and long after, but most of whom are now dead. Why did he not apply for a commission to examine Contoo Baboo to the truth of his allegations knowing him to be a man of infirm health and in the last stage of his life, when he was privy and the only person that was so to the whole transaction.' Hastings added in the latter part, 'I forget whose name is affixed to the bond as a witness of the execution and delivery of it. I am afraid it was either Cantoo's or Kishan Tackoor's who are both dead.'¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ P. J. Marshall. 'Nubkissen versus Hastings.' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, Vol. XXVIII Part 2 (1964), p. 385-386.

¹⁴⁷ Brit. Mus., 29202, f. 248-250.

It was also in the defence against the complaint of 'Nobkissen', Hastings admitted for the first time in writing about his association with Kantababu. 'And this Defendant admits that the said Cauntoo Baboo was and for the space of 24 years or thereabouts had been engaged in this defendant's service.'¹⁴⁸ This statement clearly established that Kanta baboo had been the 'Banyan' of Hastings for the first time in 1754 up to 1763 and then for the second time from 1772 to 1785.

In these years of long association, how far did one influence the other may be a natural enquiry. The influence of Hastings on Kantababu is quite discernible in the methodical way of working, in the banian's careful concern about details, in his industry and endeavour. It is to be noted that Kantababu could have enjoyed his properties quietly like Gokul Ghosal or even Nabakrisna if he did not become a force in the struggle for power between the Governor General and the Majority. His loyalty to the Governor almost made him lose everything he had, his farms, his trade as well as his position and prestige. The Majority did not spare him but vilified him in the ugliest terms whenever opportunity offered an opening. It was not before Kantababu had lost his salt khallaries that Hastings felt his policy was studded with many dangers. He started defending his banian from then on in every matter. Not a single remark, however insignificant or mistaken, passed unchallenged. This change in the Governor's policy undoubtedly saved Kantababu from losing any of his properties and the silk trade. It cannot be denied that Kantababu was indebted to Hastings for the preservation of his properties in spite of the most adverse comments of the Court of Directors.

Kantababu fulfilled the definition of the word Banian. 'For his banian a European needed an experienced merchant either with large resources of capital of his own or with connections which enabled him to borrow extensively from others.'... 'The banian was his master's contact with the Indian world, a world with which most Englishmen, lacking the linguistic skill and other expertise required, felt themselves unable to deal at first hand. The banian managed his master's household, engaged and dismissed his servants, paid his bills, lent him money for his commercial concerns and bought and sold on his behalf, acted as his intermediary when his official duties required transactions with Indians, and for some employees at least acted as his undercover agent.'¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., f. 252-258.

¹⁴⁹ P. J. Marshall, *Masters and Banians in 18th Century Calcutta*, p. 29 and p. 3-4.

In spite of their apparent proximity, the Master and the Banian were not as intimate as one would like them to be. The isolation of a religious Baisnab particularly in an advanced age was too clearly evident in Kantababu. Though he moved close to the Governor yet the cocoon of his religion enabled him to safeguard himself against a changing world. It is particularly important to notice that he never lived under the same roof with his master. When Hastings was in Chunar fort, he lived in Benaras, while travelling together, he always followed the Governor at a respectable distance in his own boat, in Calcutta he lived in his own house in Chitpor, travelling every day to the Governor's house. Like a seasoned soldier and his commanding officer, they fought many battles together and like two soldiers, they had perhaps much consideration for each other, but not much warmth, perhaps even lesser sentiment.

It is not easy to describe what was Kantababu's influence on Hastings. The life of Hastings in India made him utterly different from his contemporaries. (a) His outlook towards life changed. He even adjusted his day to day living first in India and then in England according to standards and routine of his own. (b) His love for India and Indians would not have been so deep if his experience had been other than satisfactory with his first associates in this country and (c) his continuous interest not only in 'the Indian literature and culture but particularly in the Baishnab religion, as was known and practised by those contemporary to Kantababu are certainly trends of mind which should be carefully examined. In forming each of the three motivations, Hastings could have been influenced by his banian to some extent. Hastings' attitude to life was somewhat shaded by the ideals of the Hindu religion and culture, though his English characteristic of discipline and industry remained intact. This was what influenced Kantababu most, though in his ideals he remained as Indian as ever. Rather a strange exchange of feelings which instead of bringing them closer, kept them confined to their own orbits. Hastings probably grew a taste for *hookka*—a water-pipe and hand made tobacco, but he did not take them with him to England, while Kantababu maintained them and kept them in good order instructing his family to do the same when he was no longer alive, so that the 'Barashaheb' would never find him or his family lacking in their sense of discipline and service if he ever returned to India and claimed his things. The process in which Kantababu acquired some of the materials left by Hastings also demonstrates attachment of a kind.

Throughout his life Kantababu became so much used to being the banian of Mr. Hastings, that the departure of his Master left a void in his life. Kantababu sent a note in Persian to Hastings in 1787, then wrote a very formal letter once again in Persian on 19 March 1793.¹⁵⁰ It is not known whether Hastings replied to any of them. Probably he did not.

The relation between Hastings and Kantababu culminated with this letter, leaving a fitting comment on their career together. In spite of the closeness which daily work necessitated, there was probably lack of communication between them, yet their attachment was sincere. Hastings protected his banian from the onslaught of his enemies as genuinely as he would have protected himself. Kantababu also served his master as genuinely within the bounds of his social-religious life.

With his association with Hastings and the English Company Kantababu became one of the new Indians who rose from the middle class to create an Estate by his single handed endeavour. His religious practices became more expressive under the English patronage and he was free to pay his homage to the Brahmins of the different places, which he did regularly. His use of the Bengali language also became more pronounced. In his personal character this English influence is discernible. Always a courageous man, now as the banian to the Governor, he became more so. His exploits in the Bijaygarh fort and his authoritative letter to Raja Mahipnarayan, mark him out as a person who had ample stock of common sense and perseverance.

After the departure of Hastings, Kantababu practically retired from public life and once again became a trader in cotton cloth goods. Till the time of his death Kantababu led an active life in spite of failing health and continuously endeavoured to improve the administration of his organisation. The stamp of the cautious discipline of his master could be read in his every action.

¹⁵⁰ Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29195, f. 36 & 38.

CHAPTER II

HIS PROPERTIES 1773—1794

The acquisition of properties by Kantababu during the latter part of his life can be divided into two distinct periods. During his occupation as the Banian of the Governor General between 1773 to 1785 he collected properties which constitute the first period and properties acquired after his relinquishment of the office of the Banian form the last period, starting from 1785 to his death in January 1794. Kantababu had by the time of the arrival of Hastings as Governor become an expert in choosing a property. Basically he did not go beyond the districts of his involvement which were Murshidabad, Burdwan, Dinajpur and Calcutta. But the times were changing; the huge Dinajpur District was cut up on all sides forming the new districts of Rangpur and Malda. Murshidabad held irresistible charm to Kantababu and he never missed the opportunity of buying a significant property there. In the case of his home town he would buy every thing that was offered, however insignificant or trivial. Regarding Calcutta, he was always a bit uncertain, limiting himself to the choicest morsels. The kaleidoscope gradually becomes understandable. In the first period under discussion between 1773 to 1785 Kantababu acquired 70 properties throughout Bengal of which 62 were in Murshidabad, 1 in Birbhum, 1 in Burdwan, 1 in Maldah, 1 in Rangpur and 4 in Calcutta. In the latter period between 1785 to 1794 he bought only 28 properties of which 22 were in Murshidabad and 1 each in the districts of Nadia, Faridpur and Rajshahi. He however accepted the gift of Warren Hastings of the Ghazipur (Ballia) property in United Province. Of the two properties of Brindaban, Narsing acquired one in U. P. while in exile. It is interesting to note that between 1773 to 1794 almost all the properties were acquired in the name of Lokenath, the only son of Kantababu. The table of the acquisition of property (at the end of the chapter) will show that the acquiring of property can be called to be the index to Kantababu's motive. Whenever there was trouble brewing, Kantababu ceased buying properties but as soon as he found that the coast was clear and a favourable wind was blowing he went forward very quickly. The good years of his acquisition were the best years of his life. Thus in 1180 (1773-74) he collected 17 properties, in 1181 (1774-75) he

collected 11, in 1188 (1781-82) 11, in 1191 (1784-85) 8, in 1198 (1791-92) 7 and in 1199 (1792-93) 8 properties. There are four blank years when not even a single property was acquired, these were 1184 (1777-78), 1193 (1786-87), 1195 (1788-89) and 1196 (1789-90). It is not at all difficult to trace the reason of caution in these lean years. In 1184 Kantababu was having a rough time with Hastings, particularly in regard to his Farms, about which the Court of Directors had taken an exception. In 1193 Kantababu's Cotton trade was in a very low state and presumably kept him pre-occupied in the successful closure of this business. In 1195-96 Kantababu was closing the silk filature trade and carefully keeping himself away from the bankrupt Narsing, taking precautions that his dues to his creditors did not devolve on the family. As a special precaution Narsing's son, Baisnabcharan also closed his lucrative agency for silk with the Gujarati merchants. Apart from these, four years 1183, 1187, 1190 and 1197 were bad years also. Only two properties each were collected in each of these years. From 1183 to 1187 (1776 to 1781) is the period of pressure and assault by the Majority on the Governor and his Banian. It is possible to draw a graph of discontent in this period. 1195 or 1788-89 preceded the black year of 1790, from which slow recovery is marked by 1197 or 1790-91 which culminated into normal conditions next year. The low dealings in 1200 or 1793-94 is undoubtedly the sign of the poor state of health of Kantababu, who died that year.

Before plunging into year to year survey it will be necessary to note that after the Permanent Settlement was promulgated the instinct of collecting individual properties was curbed to a great extent. Maharaja Lokenath in spite of the most favourable atmosphere collected only 51 properties during his time of ten years, after the death of his father, of which 42 properties were in Murshidabad only. His properties in Nadia were accidental collections because of the tragedy in the family. From these factors it is no longer difficult to deduce that organising the collection in the Permanent Settlement was not an easy task to start with. This is particularly demonstrated in the detailed accounts of Baharbund and other Parganas in Rungpore, which are available in the State Archives. If good management and payment of Revenue in time was the one side of the coin then buying new properties for the default in the payment of Revenue, which first came to be known as 'Auction Sale of Properties' and later as 'Revenue Sale of Properties', was the other side of the same coin. Lokenath was the first Zemindar under the Permanent Settlement, his efficiency of management and outlook

were fully attuned to the new system. While Kantababu chose his properties then acquired them slowly bit by bit, Lokenath bought properties generally around his house which were both small and insignificant but pounced on the Revenue Sale of an important property with the alertness of a hungry tiger.

As the year to year acquisition of properties are discussed, the unimportant properties would be partially overlooked to create a little less monotony in the narrative.

The most important purchase that Kantababu made in 1180 (1773-74) as the banian of the Governor General was to acquire a house for living which would be suitable for his status and position. The city of Calcutta was then divided according to the status of the inhabitants. The Bengali aristocrats gathered together in the Chitpore and Shovabazar areas, Kantababu therefore on 21 Agrahayana 1180 or December 1773 bought a pucca house in Sootanooti comprising of 3 Bighas and 8 Kathas of land for the sum of Rs. 11,001 from one Shibchandra Sarma.¹ This Chitpur house became the principal residence of the family in Calcutta till 31 October, 1844 when the great-grandson of Kantababu committed suicide here. It was from this house that Kantababu used to attend to his duties in a horsedrawn carriage with Gopi Chhatradhar holding the colourful palm leaf umbrella over his head. Kantababu's residence in Chitpur added to the importance of the locality and other aristocrats also came and settled there.

The confidence in which the Governor held his banian reflected in the purchase of properties in Murshidabad. Kantababu bought sixteen properties during the year, of which except two, all were in the name of Lokenath Nandy. The first property bought on 1 Baisakh 1180 (April 1773) was a group of talooks in Pargana Fatesing which had been purchased in the *benami* of Lala Madanmohan in 1771. Now the property was re-purchased from him for the same price of Rs. 616.² This policy has been used in earlier transactions also. A property held in *benami* (or in the name of another person) is re-purchased as soon as the danger blows over. On the 9 and 13 Sravan (July-August 1773), Lokenath Nandy bought over three bighas of Lakhraj land for Rs. 176-4-0 from

¹Cossimbazar Raj Records. Calcutta, 24 Parganas and Howrah Properties, Sl.71. (M-102), (C8/K I).

²Ibid., Murshidabad Properties, Sl.118, (72/11)

Nandamohan Sarma and an orchard for Rs. 55 both in the Parganas of Chunakhali.³ The garden in Shibdanga in Pargana Shamaskhali bought for Rs. 101 on 13 Bhadra and the land and trees in Radhanagore in Pargana Chunakhali from Krisnakanta Ghosh purchased for Rs. 73-5-0 on 5 Aswin were the two purchases made rather quickly in September 1773.⁴ The next two acquisitions were in the name of Kantababu himself. The first was made on the 15 Kartick (November 1773) when a house along with its date and palm trees were purchased for Rs. 27. This property being in the Gopjan Mouza in Mahalandi Pargana was subjected to inundation by the river every year. That was perhaps the reason for its cheap price. After three days, on 18 Kartick, Krisnakanta Nandy bought 110 Bighas of land for Rs. 550, in Pargana Mankar and Surkar.⁵ Lokenath Nandy started buying around his house and gardens. On 14 Agrahayana he bought 2 Kattas of land for Rs. 5 for the extension of his Jhoukhola orchard. On 24 Agrahayana he bought 2 bighas and 16 kattas of land for Rs. 141 in Sripur for the extension of the area of the family house from Bijoyram Sarma who sold his Lakhraj land for a good price.⁶ It should be noted that the reason of the high price of the Lakhraj lands was that they were rent-free. The original owners of these lands were generally Brahmin-pundits, who were moving out of Murshidabad to settle in the freehold lands offered by the Maharaja of Nadia or in the predominantly Brahman locality in Bhatpara near Calcutta. These movements denote the emergence of a new social order. The Bhatpara near Berhampore also became more populated during this time. Lokenath continued to increase his orchard by buying a garden in Jhoukhola on 22 Pous (January 1774) for Rs. 59, on 12 Magh (February 1774) by buying 1 Bigha and 2 kattas of Lakhraj land for Rs. 55 from Beernarayan Roy and on 5 Chaitra (March 1774) by purchasing one bigha and 12 kattas of land including a tank for Rs. 80 from Muralidhar Singha.⁷ The Zemindari purchases were carried on simultaneously. On 3 Magh (January 1774) three mahals were bought in Pargana Chunakhali for Rs. 321 from Radhagobinda Sinha, the son of Bollobhee Kanta Sinha. On 6 Magh 100 bighas of land were purchased in Mahespur Mouza in Chunakhali for Rs. 800, and on 30

³Cossimbazar Raj Records, Murshidabad Properties, Sls. 40, 185 & 110. (73/12 & 74/13)

⁴Ibid., Sls. 218 & 109 (75/14 & 76/15)

⁵Ibid., Sls. 41, 204 & 205 (77 & 78)

⁶Ibid., Sls. 114 & 43 (77/16 & 80/17).

⁷Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties, Sls. 190, 42 & 102 (81/18, 84/21 & 85/22).

Chaitra (April 1774) 6 bighas of land in Matianpara Mouza were bought for the fabulous price of Rs. 302-14-0, both the properties being in Pargana Chunakhali. The last purchase of the year was land and trees in Kooramari for Rs. 350 in the Pargana of Samaskhali and Bhudar.⁸

The year 1181 (1774-75) also started with the same optimistic note of the year before. On 2 Baisakh Lokenath bought the half Zemindari share of the village Jabagram in Pargana Mahalandi in Burdwan district for Rs. 807 from Ramprasad Sarma. This being a part of his ancestral locality of 52 villages, he did not hesitate to pay a high price which will be evident from the fact that Ramprasad Sarma had bought this property from Maniram Bhattacharya a few years ago only for Rs. 325-5-6 p.⁹ In Murshidabad nine properties were bought, of which seven were in the name of Lokenath and two were in *benami*. Six properties were purchased in the first two days of the year, 1 and 2 Baisakh (April 1774). Four of these properties belonged to the four brothers namely Nandalal Sarma, Paramananda Sarma, Utsabananda Sarma and Radhamohan Sarma who sold their respective Lakhraj lands; thus completely selling their ancestral properties of 7 bighas and 6 kattas in Jhoukhola for Rs. 210-8-0. Lokenath then immediately bought the Murshidabad portion of Pargana Mahalandi. He also bought on 1 Baisakh 1181 the talook of Bhabanandapur including its water and jungle rights for Rs. 381.¹⁰ On 17 Bhadra (September 1774) he purchased 100 bighas and 5 kattas of land in Mouza Bhabta for Rs. 802.¹¹ This was his last purchase of the year.

In the meantime trouble had started in the Supreme Council and the Majority was enjoying the upperhand by the virtue of their numbers. Kantababu as usual immediately resorted to *benami* transactions. He obtained on 2 Jaistha the settlement of Tarafs Naskarpur and Sultanpur in Pargana Goyash in the name of his gomastah of the Salt Mahal, Krisnananda Sarkar who was yet his trusted lieutenant. It is not clearly known what was the fate of this property after Krisnananda fell away. These properties were purchased in the Pargana from which Krisnananda hailed; from Rani Bhawani of Nator by the payment of

⁸Ibid., Sls. 82, 131, 177, 201, 58 & 141 (82/19, 83/20, 86/23, 87/24).

⁹Ibid., Burdwan Properties, Sl. 3 (M-3), (B 4/2).

¹⁰Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties, Sls. 17, 116, 140, 45, 186, 57, 76, 87, 154 & 68 (88/26, 89/26, 90/27, 91/28, 92/29 & 93/30)

¹¹Ibid., Sl. 60 (95/31)

Rs. 301.¹² Possibly it was the lust for this property that induced Krisnananda to break away from his master. The two other properties of the year were bought in the name of Radha Ballab Roy; whose son Krisnanath Roy became later the trusted Zemindari Naib of Lokenath and ultimately the guardian of his son, the minor Harinath. It is however not known whether the father was in the employ of Kantababu. One of the properties bought was the Talook Deshalpur etc. which Rani Bhawani sold for Rs. 722 on 19 Aswin 1181, the document having the signature of the Rani's, as was the custom of the time.¹³

In 1182 or 1775-76 Kantababu had to be very cautious about acquisition of property. Of the three Murshidabad properties, the Samaskhali land was bought on 27th Ramjan in the name of one Kalyan Roy (could be a relation of Radha Ballav and Krisnanath Roy referred to above), the Sripur lands were bought for Rs. 100 from Kashi Pandey in the name of Lokenath Nandy, but the Zemindari of ten anna share of Pargana Dashazari in north Murshidabad bordering on Bihar (the whole of Dashazaree Pargana became Bihar later) was acquired in the name of Lokenath Chaudhuri. The legal camouflage was used very intelligently, though it cannot be denied that the purpose was to get hold of this important Zemindari without fully disclosing the identity of the buyer.¹⁴ Pargana Dashazari was acquired on 29 Chaitra 1182 (April 1776) and it was exactly one year later the next property was bought. On 30 Chaitra 1183 (April 1777) the Zemindari rights of the two Mouzas of South Jalalpur and Kampoor which were known as the Talook of Ananda Chandra Roy were acquired by Lokenath Nandy for a sum of Rs. 751. This was the only property bought that year.¹⁵ No property was acquired in 1184 or 1777-78.

With the advent of 1185 or 1778-79 Kantababu felt that the storm had blown over. So on 11 Jaistha 1185 corresponding to 22 May 1778 he bought a house with 15 kattas of land in Mouza Simla in the heart of Calcutta for Rs. 2001 from Suradas Deb.¹⁶ The three Murshidabad properties acquired around their Cossimbazar house are most insignificant as acquisitions and helped only to extend the area of their house. What

¹²Ibid., Sl. 214 (94/B).

¹³Ibid., Sls. 159 & 278 (96/B).

¹⁴Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties, Sls. 103, 196, 224, 290 & 307 (97/B, 99/33 & 98/32).

¹⁵Ibid., Sl. 115 (100/34).

¹⁶Ibid., Calcutta, 24 Parganas & Howrah Properties, Sl. 75 (M-106), (C 12/K 3)

is most interesting is the manner in which these properties were acquired. Kantababu reverted to his pre-Company rule methods. The 11½ bighas of land which was an orchard were bought for Rs. 11-8-0 by Cantoo Tili on 12 Magh 1185, Lokenath Baboomahasaya bought on 9 Agrahayan 1185 the house and orchard consisting of 243 fruit trees and flower bushes for Rs. 31 from Raman Saha and on 30 Chaitra 1185 the dwelling house of Mansukh Mistri and Ghanasyam Mistri was bought for Rs. 22. All the three properties being in the Pargana of Chunakhali.¹⁷

As the proof of normalcy Kantababu obtained for his son the long delayed Sanad for Parganas Baharbund, Bhitarbund and Gayabari in the new district of Rungpore on 1 Sravan 1186 corresponding to 13 August 1779 and 20 Bhadra 1186 corresponding to 3 September 1779.¹⁸ This Dewani Sanad bore the signature of the Governor General and Ducarel, the name of Rani Bhawani was by this Sanad replaced by the name of Lokenath Chowdhury, Zemindar of Cossimbazar. The fixed Revenue of S^a Rs. 82,639 was ordered and a nazar of Rs. 5001 was taken. By the virtue of this sanad the three parganas became the personal property of Lokenath and his descendants.

Four Murshidabad properties were bought in 1186 or 1779-80. The first being a house including land and trees sold by Krisnakanta Das, the son of Dharma Das and the grandson of Kanti Das. The details of the sale is extremely interesting as it gives the prevalent rate of bricks, mortar and wood. Though the house was sold as a whole with the land and trees, yet the separate valuation of each item was given, as if the house had been knocked down, it is very peculiar indeed. The high price of the property is the result of being in close proximity to the dwelling house of Lokenath the purchaser.¹⁹ The next purchase is also as interesting. Nihalchandra Shah, a Gujarati merchant (he has signed his name in Gujarati) sells his house with 1 Bigha 8 Kattas and 8 Chatak land in the Gujratitooli for Rs. 1201 sicca on 2 Agrahayana 1186. The peculiarity here is that there is a reference to an agreement for sale between the parties as early as 1167 or 1760-61. The two other purchases are of the usual nature, one was for 6 bighas and 4 kattas of land from Habibulla Khan for Rs. 100, while

¹⁷Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties, Sls. 255, 160 & 122 (102, 101/35 & 103/36)

¹⁸Ibid., Rungpore Properties. Sl. 1 (R 1/1)

¹⁹Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties, Sl. 132 (104/37)

the other acquires two mouzas of Fatesing Pargana comprising of 3001 bighas of land. This area had been forcibly taken away by the Mahrathas during their forage into Bengal. The recoupment of the land which started in 1173 or 1766-67, was complete. Lokenath had applied to the Kazi to issue a decree or '*Boynama*' in his favour which was duly granted in Persian language. This document seems to bear no date so it is possible that the '*Boynama*' was granted earlier than 1186. It is certain that it was not granted later, hence the document has been placed here.²⁰

In 1187 or 1780-81 Kantababu had again become shy in buying properties. He bought on 6 Kartick 1187 corresponding to 19 October 1780 a Calcutta property situated in Ultadingi consisting of 6 bighas and 9 kattas of land in his own name (Crishna Cauntoo Babooji) for Rs. 1001 from Ramcharan Collya. This later became his garden of Ultadingi. The document says that the land was actually purchased on 20 Phagun 1183 or March 1777 but no deed was made then, which was being made now. The original deed is not traceable but the English translation of the deed which was submitted to the Supreme Court in 1825 is available. On the same date, that is 19 October 1780 the same Ramcharan Collya granted a patta transferring his right to pay ground rent amounting to Rs. 6-10-0 per annum to Krisnakanta babu.²¹ The other purchase of the year was in Murshidabad around the house, in Sripur Mouza. The house and land measuring 8 kattas was bought from Monsukh Mistry for Rs. 565.²² The purchase prices are puzzling some times, as it is found that the rent of house and land of Monshukh Mistry and Ghanashyam Mistry was settled for only Rs. 22 on 30 Chaitra 1185. This could of course be another house altogether. It is also found that Kantababu in the name of Lokenath did not hesitate to pay high prices for houses, tank and land adjacent to his own buildings. This house situated on 8 kattas of land was contiguous to the tank of Kantababu's house, which perhaps explains the payment of a high price.

By 1188 or 1781-82 Kantababu fully recovered from whatever constraint he was suffering in purchasing properties. The Chait Singh affair restored him fully into the confidence of the Governor General which was demonstrated in his purchasing of eleven properties, all in

²⁰Ibid., Sls. 27, 171, 220 & 311 (105/38, 106 & 107/39)

²¹Cossimbazar Raj Records. Calcutta, 24-Parganas and Howrah Properties., Sls. 73 & 78, (M- 104 & 129) (C 13/K4 & C 14/K5).

²²Ibid. Murshidabad Properties, Sls. 53 & 172, (108/40)

Murshidabad. It cannot be denied that Kantababu's acquisitions were concentrated in his home district and he liked nothing better than to acquire properties in this district. This will be amply clear from the chart given in the Appendix where the year to year acquisitions are tabled district by district. It was during the course of this year that Kantababu received the Revenue rights of the Ballia Pargana in Gazipur, U.P. from Raja Mahipnarayan the successor of Chait Singh. But as the gift was not disclosed till the January of 1785, few people knew about the settlement.

In the year 1188 or 1781-82 Kantababu bought eleven properties, all in Murshidabad. The first, dated 6 Jaistha is the very important property consisting of Mouzas Purandarpur, Mitrapur and Manoharpur which were sold by Parbati Debya Chowdhurani, the wife of Hariprasad Chowdhury for Rs. 4751.²³ The next acquisition was not a straight sale. Sri Jnanchandra Saha mortgaged Hatu Shah's garden to Kantababu for Rs. 1500 in Falgoon 1187, as he could not repay the loan within the stipulated time, the property was acquired in the name of Lokenath Nandy on 16 Jaistha 1188. The next purchase was very important. On 29 Chaitra 1182 Lokenath Nandy had bought 10 annas share of Pargana Dashazari, now he buys the rest of the Pargana or 6 annas share of the property from Hemnarayan Roy for Rs. 1251. This gave him the control of 27 Mouzas. On 15 Bhadra Banikanta Sarma sold his talook in Binodnagar tahsil in Katlamari for Rs. 79 only. This area situated on the big river (Padma) turned the attention of Kantababu to the Rajshahi District situated on the opposite side of the river.²⁴ Concentrating on Katlamari Mouza for its obvious advantages Lokenath Nandy acquired the 'jama mahal' known as Jaykrisnapur for Rs. 17-9-0 at an annual rent of Rs 4. Both the Katlamari properties were situated in Pargana Garerhat. Reverting to Pargana Chunakhali and buying around the house Lokenath bought 3 bighas and 17 kattas of land in Cossimbazar from Anandachandra Roy Chowdhury and the wife of late Udaynarayan Roy Chowdhury for Rs. 539 on 11 Agrahayana or November 1781. On the same date Udaynarayan's wife sells her individual 13 annas share in 1 Bigha and 5 kattas land inclusive of a tank for Rs. 88. As Kantababu has been long absent, being with the Governor General in Benaras, these purchases were undoubtedly the handiwork of young Lokenath and his

²³Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties, Sl. 71 (109/41) (Lost)

²⁴Ibid., Sl. 72 & 189, 307 & 119, (110/42, 111/43 & 112/44).

local guardian Baisnabcharan. On the same date Lokenath purchased from Golak Sen garden-land of 8 kattas for Rs. 21 on the south of Hatu Shah's 'Bagicha'. On 7th Pous (December 1781) two deeds are found, one for the purchase of $3\frac{3}{4}$ kattas of land in Kasimnagar, which was sold by the widow of Fakir Chand for Rs. 27 and the other for Lakhraj land (rent free) which was a part of the ancestral Bramhattor land which was sold for the identical price by the wife of Udaychand.²⁵

The last purchase of the year was also in Pargana Chunakhali. This was also a Bramhattor land which was sold by Abharani Deb Sarma for Rs. 31-8-0. The deed reveals many informations. Abharani (could be Abharashi—but what will be its meaning then?) had worked in various capacities with different people. He had been for sometime an employee of Kantababu. He may have also worked for the Europeans of Cossimbazar as many of their transactions were conducted through him. The land sold was only $4\frac{1}{2}$ kattas situated in the Kasimnagar Mouza.²⁶ Abharani was an inhabitant of the Brahman settlement of Bishnoopur, which is to-day a completely deserted place. The epithet 'Deb Sarma' is also found here for the first time. Earlier Brahmans were satisfied only to write 'Sarma' or 'Sarmanah', but now the Bengal Brahmans started using 'Deb' or 'Deva' before Sarma to denote their highly purified status. (Deb means a God or superior being).

The purchases from 15 Bhadra (August 1781) to the end of the Bengali year are extremely significant as they were made during the long absence of Kantababu in Benaras. It also seems probable that the family was quite ignorant about the risks that Kantababu was undertaking for the Governor General in Benaras. The news of his capture by Chait Singh and his subsequent release did not reach the family as Lokenath went on merrily purchasing lands even when Kantababu was bitterly tasting the experience of a life time in the Fort of Bijaygarh. Another factor is also clear. The family did not even apprehend that any danger could befall Kantababu while he was with his master. This confidence in the English rulers and their system is a remarkable phenomenon observed throughout the later part of the eighteenth

²⁵Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties, Sls. 99, 63 & 143, 54, 209, 26 & 195. (113/45, 114/46, 115/47, 116/48, 117/49 & 118/50).

²⁶Ibid., Sls. 56 & 105 (119/51).

and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries.* It was the fall of the Marathas that led the Bengali Hindu to believe that the Company was here to rule every body and not merely to destroy the corrupt Mughal domination of the country.

In 1189 or 1782-83 there are no important acquisitions at all but the year demonstrates various ways of acquisition of properties. Binodram Sarma took a loan of Rs. 412 at 2 per cent interest per month on 14 Jaistha 1188, mortgaging his property of Naniapur in Fatesingh Pargana in Murshidabad. He promised to repay the principal and interest fully by the 30 Chaitra of the year failing which the property will be acquired by Lokenath Nandy on 14 Jaistha 1189 corresponding to 5 May 1782. The payment could not be made and the Kazi gave his seal of consent to Lokenath to acquire the property. On 2 Ashar (June 1782) Lokenath bought 5 kattas of Bramhattor land from Durgacharan Sarma for Rs. 30 in Gopalghata²⁷. On 19 Agrahayan or December 1782, Lokenath bought his first property by Revenue sale. This was a mahal which belonged to Anoopchandra Roy Chowdhury known as the Shahjahanpur Pargana in Murshidabad which was put to sale because of the default in revenue payment. Lokenath proved to be the highest bidder with Rs. 1724. This is a very interesting document which gives a clear picture of the time.²⁸ It is not known why a month later on the 19 Pous (January 1783) the purchase of the village Banjetty which comprised of 5 bighas 4½ kattas of land, with a tank and 167 trees was made in the *benama* of Radhaballav Roy for Rs. 225.²⁹ The first Birbhum property was acquired in the same year.³⁰ As the deed is unfortunately missing no further detail can be found of the property.

The cautiousness in buying properties extended into the proceeding year. Except two insignificant purchases in Murshidabad there was no attempt at acquiring properties in 1190 or 1783-84. The Lakhraj land of 2 bighas and 9 kattas bought for Rs. 294 on 7 Jaistha was followed by

* Probably till Wellesley's 'Subsidiary Alliance' and Lake's occupation of Delhi on 16 September, 1803, after which the English became the 'masters' of India.

²⁷Gossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties, Sl. 232 & 203 (120/52 & 121/53)

²⁸Ibid., Sl. 292 (122/54)

²⁹Ibid., Sl. 236 (123/B)

³⁰Ibid., Birbhum Properties Sl. 1 (Deed Missing) (Birbhum 1/1).

the purchase of Bramhattor lands from the Brahman families who were fast moving out of Murshidabad.³¹

Those interested in social movement would find this period interesting. The Chart of the sale will show that Brahmans were systematically selling their land. This was perhaps to go near Calcutta where the newly rich Indians were creating a special status for themselves by donating free gifts of lands to Brahmans or to settle in Nadia to enjoy the patronage of the Brahman Zemindar.

Kantababu shed all hesitation acquiring eight properties in Murshidabad in the year 1191 or 1784-85. He must have been conscious about the departure of Hastings during the year. These eight properties are the highest in number during the last ten years of his life (1784-94) but for the last year when another group of eight properties were acquired in the year 1792-93. In spite of the number of properties, they were all insignificant in character. Their only importance lay in their situation around the house. Out of the eight properties 5 were in Chuna-khali Pargana. On 9 Bhadra (August 1784) Lokenath bought 4 bighas and 3 kattas land in Cossimbazar for Rs. 72 from Saiad Dewantulla. The sale of properties by a muslim required the special seal of the Kazi the affixing of which was compulsory. The property was in Sibdanga Mouza. On 22 Aswin (October 1784) after a long time, Krisnakanta Nandy in his own name, bought from the widow of Udaychandra Roy Chowdhury, Parbaticharan Roy Chowdhury and others 2 bighas and 1 katta land in talook Kasimnagar which was situated on the side of the the Ganges for Rs. 120. On 7 Kartick (October 1784) Lokenath bought a house including its brick foundations in Sripur from Mansaram Das of Gujarat for Rs. 201. This deed also had the special seal of the Kazi. The sale of the properties by the Gujarati merchants settled in Cossimbazar, probably means that its importance as a place of commerce, particularly as a silk producing centre was waning. These deeds of sale by the Gujarati gentlemen merchants signify that their exodus from Cossimbazar had already begun. On 17 Pous (January 1785) Lokenath bought 3 kattas of Bramhattor land in Ghanashyambati for Rs. 18 from Dayaram Sarmā of Gujarat. On 8 Chaitra (March 1785) Kantababu

³¹Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties, Slis. 65, 155 & 182 (124/55 & 125/56).

got the settlement of a creek (nala) which passed through his garden from Mohamood Sauduck Nossio for a yearly rental of $4\frac{1}{2}$ annas.³²

Of the three remaining properties that were acquired during the year, Lokenath first obtained the patta of a house of Siromoni Das for an annual rental of Rs. 8 from Maheswari Dasi and Kashinath Sarma on 24 Agrahayan (December 1784). This house was situated in the Khas talook. He also acquired 6 bighas of Kheraji land for Rs. 55 from Kalyan Roy in Mouza Bhudar. The deed does not bear any date except the year in which it was executed.³³ The last property of the year was a patta obtained by Baisnabcharan which was his first property in Murshidabad. He took settlement of the land and orchard known as the 'Chhayghari Bagan' (the orchard of 6 O'clock) for an annual rental of Rs. 22-12-0. This property was however sold to 'Maharaja' Lokenath on 22 Magh 1206 (February 1800) by Mirza Jafrancee Beg two years after the demise of Baisnabcharan.³⁴

The year after the departure of Hastings, made Kantababu very cautious again. Just before his departure in January 1785 the settlement of the Ballia property was revealed. During the year 1192 or 1785-86 only three properties were purchased in Murshidabad which were in fact only one property belonging to Udaynarayan Roy Chowdhury whose land and houses were being sold in parts by his wife and other members of the family.³⁵ In the next year 1193 or 1786-87 not a single property was purchased. It is possible that Kantababu's involvement with the Cotton cloth trade and Silk filatures prevented him from paying any attention to any other matter. It cannot be denied however that this quietness seems strange. The acquisitions were also becoming stereotyped. The two properties of Murshidabad purchased on 1 Bhadra and 3 Chaitra in 1194 (1787-88) were both in Shibdanga, in pargana Chunakhali and bought for paltry sums of money.³⁶ The important properties of the year were bought outside Murshidabad. Kantababu for the first time stepped out of his self-imposed boundary and purchased his first property in Faridpur, Nadia and Rajshahi districts. In the past the acquisition of properties was restricted to

³²Cossimbazar Raj Records, Murshidabad Properties. Slis. 95, 61 & 167, 223, 314 & 66 (126/57, 127, 128/58, 130/60 & 131).

³³Ibid., Slis. 69 & 107 (129/59 & 133/61)

³⁴Ibid., Sl. 237 (132/BCN/1)

³⁵Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties, Slis. 14, 59 & 168; & 16 & 202 (134, 135/62, 136/63).

³⁶Ibid., Slis. 5 & 199 (137 & 138)

Murshidabad, Calcutta, Burdwan and Dinajpur, the four districts Kantababu knew well. The Birbhum property was analogous to Murshidabad and it was merely the result of the fresh demarcation of the district boundary that it fell within Birbhum. Stepping out into new territories required a great amount of courage. Kantababu was over 65 years of age, his son Lokenath, an intelligent but rather sickly young man of 23, was certainly not likely to be possessing that courage. The initiative is presumed to have been taken by Baisnabcharan, the loyal nephew whom Kantababu had himself trained. In fact the ascendancy of Baisnabcharan can be further proved from the Filature Silk production which was also started at this time. A man of 43 years enjoying the fullest confidence of the uncle, Baisnabcharan seems to be the person whose courage took the family to Faridpur, Nadia and Rajshahi to buy properties. The latter acquisition was also made under unavoidable circumstances. On 4 Sravan, 1194 corresponding to 17 June, 1787 the Jalalpur mahal in Chuklah Jehangirnagar was bought by Baisnabcharan Nandy in a Revenue sale. John Weston, the Collector signed the order, the annual revenue of the property being Rs. 1784. Baisnabcharan bought the Mahal for Rs. 2300.⁸⁷ The Tajpur Mahal in Rajshahi District was acquired by Lokenath Nandy on 13 Bhadra, 1194 (September 1787) as the owner of the property Shyamlal Das had it mortgaged for a loan of S^a Rs. 5900 which he could not repay.⁸⁸

The first Nadia property was also purchased in the year. On 28 Bhadra 1194 corresponding to 11 September, 1787-Lokenath bought the two talooks of Dihi Meherpur and Rajpur in Revenue sale. These properties situated in the Chukla Rajshahi were the properties of Rani Bhawani. Lokenath bought them for the sum of Rs. 4596-3-17½ gondas, the Collector issuing an order to the effect geneally known as the '*Boynama*'.⁸⁹

It was unfortunate for the family as the leadership of Baisnabcharan did not prove to be successful. The next two years were occupied in the endeavour to make the Filature silk production lucrative which ultimately failed. Kantababu in his advanced age and ill health had to intervene to close the manufacturies without any ill effect. Many things happened in the next two years 1195 (1788-89) and 1196 (1789-90). The Permanent

⁸⁷Cossimbazar Raj Records. Faridpur Properties, Sl. 1(M-1) (F1/BCN)

⁸⁸Ibid., Rajshahi Properties, Sl. 4(M-31) (Rj1/1)

⁸⁹Ibid., Nadia Properties, Sl. 10 (M-81) (N1/1)

Settlement came into effect bringing far-reaching changes in the socio-economic situation of the country. Kantababu retired from the political scene and started staying permanently in Cossimbazar. Baisnabcharan's father Narsingh who was earning well as a local Banker, crashed in his business and fled the Company's domain. Lokenath became so ill that it was feared that he would not live. All this led to the complete suspension of all activities by the family from mid-September 1787 to mid-April 1790. The administration under the Governor General Cornwallis was not very favourable to Kantababu. His petition for temporary remission of revenue for the floods which created havoc in the locality of Jalalpur and Nowpara was rudely turned down with the remark, that the Government was not prepared to grant this favour as the Zemindar Krisna Kanta owned vast property and was able to bear any loss arising from a temporary calamity in a part of his Zemindari.⁴⁰

Two insignificant properties were purchased in 1197 or 1790-91; one in the name of 'Dewan Krisnakanta Babooji Mahasaya' and the other in the name of Lokenath. The properties were a house sold by Shipbrasad Sarkar in Bhatpara for Rs. 80 on 30 Baisakh (May 1790) and Bramhattor land in Mouza Dhananjoybati sold by Avarani Debsarma on 5 Kartic (October 1790) for Rs. 17-6-8 g.⁴¹

Undoubtedly confidence returned in 1198 or 1791-92 and a total of six properties were bought, five of which were in Murshidabad. Lokenath now being addressed as 'Maharaja' immediately dropped his surname being addressed consistently as 'Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur'. Out of the five, four properties were taken in his name, the remaining one was taken in the name of an employee as the consideration money was too meagre for the 'Maharaja' to lend his name. The first property was bought on 11 Jaistha (May 1791) being a house or room in Hat-Sreepur, from Shaik Hedaiatullah for Rs. 45. The second was the pond on the south of the tailor's house which Gourikanta Das settled on Mahadeb Sinha on 15 Agrahayan (November 1791) for twelve annas rental per year. The third property was 6½ bighas of orchard owned by Mirza Mohammed Hafez Beg who settled it permanently with the 'Maharaja' on 25 Magh (February 1792) for an annual rent of Rs. 6-8-0. On the same date of settling, Mirza Mohammed Hafez Beg sells his

⁴⁰N. K. Sinha, *Economic History of Bengal*, Vol. II (1962, Calcutta), p. 123.

⁴¹Cossimbazar Raj Records. *Murshidabad Properties*, Shs. 155, 25 & 101 (139, 140/64).

orchard for Rs. 65. Wherever ownership and rent rights were thus unitedly sold, there was certainly a superior landlord and the seller was only selling his lease to the buyer. The fifth and the last deed of the year dated 26 Magh (February 1792) was the sale of a pucca house for Rs. 53 by Nityananda Sarma.⁴²

The exiled Narsingha Nandy had in the meantime purchased a property in Brindaban in the name of his nephew 'Maharaja Lokenath' and had started living there. This house later called 'Pulin-Kunja' was situated on the shore of the Jumna river (literally *pulin* means shore, *kunja*—a garden). Though there is no deed traceable, the communication between Brindaban and Cossimbazar established the acquisition in that year.⁴³ Narsingha stayed in this house in Brindaban for quite some time, returning only in 1798. This house bought by Narsingha consisted of 20 bighas and 6 kattas of land which was bought for Rs. 432-3-0. The deed was registered in Agra. This purchase immediately prompted Kantababu to buy 16 bighas of land in Mathura for Rs. 970-11-6 from Krisna Prosad Misra. This land was also on the Jumna.⁴⁴

The next two years, till the death of Kantababu, were utilised in buying properties in Murshidabad only and that also around the house. Ten properties were bought, all being insignificant in size or importance, all being however purchased in the name of 'Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur'. Now the sale deeds described the father of the purchaser consistently as 'Dewan Krisnakanta Babooji'. In 1199 or 1792-93 eight properties were purchased. The first was purchased on 9 Baisakh (April 1792) from the wife of Gorachand Champati the Vakeel of Kantababu in the salt dispute with Krisnananda Sarkar. Gorachand had taken a loan of Rs. 301 which he could not pay, so after his death his wife Neelmoni Devi sold their house in the taluk Purusottom in Kalikapur Pargana for Rs. 401, thus receiving Rs. 100 more than the repayment of debt. On 10 Sravan (July 1792) Lokenath took settlement of 9 cubits of land for an annual rent of six annas for throwing the cow-dung of the Maharaja's cow-house. On 13 Sravan (July 1792) Raghunandan Das sold his one room shop for Rs. 33. Brajanath Mitra sold his house inclusive

⁴²Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties, Sl. 170, 238, 217, 113 & 152 (141/65, 142/B, 143/66, 144/67 & 145/68).

⁴³Ibid., Brindaban & Mathura Properties, Sl. 1 (Brindaban 1/1).

⁴⁴Cossimbazar Raj Records. Brindaban & Mathura Properties, Sl. 6 (Brindaban 2).

of $3\frac{1}{2}$ kattas of land for Rs. 180 on 28 Agrahayan (December 1792). Ramdulal Ghosh on 16 Magh (February 1793) sold 6 bighas of land along with two tanks for Rs. 160. On 25 Magh (February 1793) Narsingha and Gobindaram Sarma sold their $6\frac{1}{2}$ kattas of Bramhattor land or Rs. 25-1-12 g. Harekrishna Sarma of Kantanagar however sold 4 bighas and $6\frac{1}{2}$ kattas of Bramhattor land for Sicca Rs. 22 only, on 6 Chaitra (March 1793). Gorachand Sarma of Chunakhali sold on 30 Chaitra (April 1793) his 13 kattas of Brahmattor land for Rs. 19-8-0.⁴⁵ This was the last purchase of the year. The period between April to July was utilised by the family to go to Ballia in U.P. where on 1 May 1793 the Religious Charitable Trust was signed and registered. Then the family travelled to Brindaban. Here they arranged to establish a Samajbari or a place where their asthi (the last remnant after the body is burnt in the funeral pyre) will be preserved. This is also a typical custom of the Gaudiya Baisnab Sect.

In 1200 the two properties acquired by 'Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur' in Murshidabad were as typical and insignificant as the rest, before them. On 29 Ashar (July 1793) he rented an orchard from Udaynarayan Ghosh, which was adjacent to his own for an annual rent of Rs. 5-12-0, the area being 5 bighas and 15 kattas of land. On 3 Pous (December 1793) Bhairabnath Das and Baidyanath Das sold their orchard with 48 trees for Rs. 42 only. This was the last deed signed during the life time of Kantababu.⁴⁶

Significantly his first deed was of a settlement of a jackfruit tree for an annual rent of Rs. 3 and his last deed, in the name of his son, was for the purchase of 48 trees for Rs. 42. Though the situation of the jackfruit tree and the 48 trees in the Jhaukhola orchard were not very far away from each other, yet the situation of Kantababu vastly differed between 1742 and 1794. He died between the afternoons of 9 and 10 January 1794 corresponding to 28 and 29 Pous 1200.

The acquisition of properties is the barometer of Kantababu's life, while the acquisition of Murshidabad properties is the inner wheel of the barometer. If he did not acquire properties in Murshidabad he acqu-

⁴⁵Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties, Slis. 158, 267, 164, 210, 92 108, 149, 86 & 253 (146, 147/69, 148/70, 149/71, 150/72, 151/73, 152/74 and 153/75).

⁴⁶Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties, Slis. 268 & 245. (154/76 & 155/77).

ited properties no where else. Murshidabad was the starting point every time. The chart of the acquisition when read with the catalogue of properties demonstrates the stress and tribulations that Kantababu had to suffer during the last 20 years of his life (1773 to 1794). It will also show when he felt confident to move forward and when he held back cautiously. Thus the chart of the acquisition of properties means much more than a list of purchases; of dates and details of transactions. This could have been a modern machine which indicated the condition of the mental state of Kantababu, indeed, a graph can be drawn to specify the attitude.

From the list of properties certain conclusions can be made. During his banianship of the Governor General he did not try to increase his total property very much. After Hastings' departure he merely consolidated his position. The Sunad of Baharbund and Ballia's Revenue assignment were certainly big deals. But the Baharbund property was for long nursed by Kantababu and the granting of the Sunad was merely a formal recognition of his rights in 1779. The purchases of the Calcutta properties were certainly important purchases made at the time, but here also Kantababu did not buy as many properties as he could have done. He depended much on the Revenue sale which gave him important properties in different places. He bought one property each in Burdwan, Nadia, Birbhum, Malda, Faridpur, Rajshahi and Rungpore. The Brindaban Properties depict the religious motivation, though started by Narsingh out of sheer necessity.

A list of monetary transactions will depict a true picture of the involvements. Let the period between 1773 and 1785 be first scrutinised.

It will be clear from the table in page 103 that during the 12 years under review Kantababu bought in his name properties worth Rs. 14,711-8-0, in the name of Lokenath Rs. 21,744-5-6 and in Benami Rs. 1145-12-0, totalling to Rs. 37,631-9-6, which averages to an investment of little less than Rs. 3136 per year.

If the three other accounts are added like the Benami transactions of the Maldah property for Rs. 201 and the Birbhum property for Rs. 325, the total will exceed only by Rs. 526. Even if the *Nazar* that was paid for Baharbund is added the total increases by another Rs. 5001 (It should be remembered that it was not purchase price), bringing the amount to Rs. 43,158-9-6 or increasing the average annual investment by Rs. 460

only. By all accounts this was too modest a deed for the Banian of the Governor who had himself in the past invested annually over Rs. 8000 per year as the Banian of Sykes. In the subsequent period that is between 1785 and 1794 the investments were even lower.

The table in page 104 establishes that during the 9 years under review Kantababu bought in his name properties worth Rs. 481, in the name of his son Lokenath Rs. 11,310 and in the name of Baisnabcharan Rs. 2444, creating a total of Rs. 14,235-3-17½, which averages to a little more than Rs. 1581 per annum. These figures show that Kantababu's investments were cut to half compared to the sum of the previous period. Add to this the price of the Brindaban property of Rs. 423 and the total will come to Rs. 14,658, when this sum is added to the previous figure of Rs. 43,158 it is found that the total amount spent for acquiring properties comes of Rs. 57,816 only and the average annual investment drops to Rs. 2753. The final position of the acquisition of properties will be very interesting indeed.

It is evident from the table in page 105 that the total amount invested between 1773 and 1794 or the latter part of Kantababu's life was only Rs. 57,816-13-3½ gondas. If the annual return is calculated at 30% the potential income from the property would be S^a Rs. 17,344.80 or a little over Current Rs. 18,731 (1:1.08 ratio).

Now if the two parts of Kantababu's life is put together a remarkably well laid plan will come into view.

	Amount of Total Investment	Income per Annum
1742 to 1772—30 years S ^a	Rs. 58006-8-15	Current Rs. 18792
1773 to 1794—21 years „ „	57816-13-3½	„ „ 18731
Total	1,15,823-5-18½	37,523

The programme of annual investment also evident in the periodic annual average will show the working of a very well disciplined mind. Between 1742-1763—21 years—his average annual investment was

1742-1763—21 years—	Rs. 1601-0-0
1765-1769—5 years—	8039-0-0
1770-1772—3 years—	1760-0-0
1773-1785—12 years—	3596-0-0
1786-1794—9 years—	1627-0-0

Involvement in different Properties from 1773-1785

	Murahidabad			Burdwan		Calcutta	Grand Total		
	Kantababu	Lokenath	Benami	Lokenath	Kantababu	K.	L.	B.	Total
80 (1773-74)	Rs. 577-0-0	3,135-6-0	X		11,001-0-0	11,578-0-0	3,135-6-0	X	14,713-6-0
81 (1774-75)	X	1,719-6-6	1,023-0-0	607-0-0		X	2,326-6-6	1,023-0-0	3,349-6-6
82 (1775-76)	X	2,101-0-0					2,101-0-0		2,101-0-0
83 (1776-77)	X	751-0-0					751-0-0		751-0-0
84 (1777-78)	X								
85 (1778-79)	11-8-0	53-0-0			2,001-0-0	2,012-8-0	53-0-0		2,065-8-0
86 (1779-80)	X	1,626-0-0	100-0-0				1,626-0-0	100-0-0	1,726-0-0
87 (1780-81)	X	565-0-0			1,001-0-0	1,001-0-0	565-0-0		1,566-0-0
88 (1781-82)	X	8,152-1-0					8,152-0-0		8,152-0-0
89 (1782-83)	X	2,391-0-0					2,391-0-0		2,391-0-0
90 (1783-84)	X	325-8-0					325-8-0		325-8-0
91 (1784-85)	120-0-0	348-0-0	22-12-0			120-0-0	348-0-0	22-12-0	510-12-0
Rs. 708-8-0	21,167-5-6	1,145-12-0	607-0-0	14,003-0-0	14,711-8-0	21,774-5-6	1,145-12-0		37,631-9-6

Involvement in different Properties from 1785-1794

	Murshidabad				Nadia		Faridpur		Rajshahi		Grand Total	
	Kantababu	Lokenath	Baisnab	Lokenath	Baisnab	Lokenath	Kantababu	Lokenath	Bainsab	Total		
1192 (1785-86)	141-0-0	124-0-0						141	124	265-0-0		
1193 (1786-87)												
1194 (1787-88)			20-0-0	4,596-3-17½	2,300-0-0	5,900-0-0		10496*	2,320	12,816-3-17½		
1195 (1788-89)												
1196 (1789-90)												
1197 (1790-91)	80-0-0	17-0-0				80		17		97-0-0		
1198 (1791-92)		169-0-0						169		169-0-0		
1199 (1792-93)	401-0-0	440-0-0				401		440		841-0-0		
1200 (1793-94)		47-0-0						47		47-0-0		
	481-0-0	814-0-0	144-0-0	4,596-3-17½	2,300-0-0	5,900-0-0	481-0-0	11,310*	2,444	14,235-3-17½		

*actual figures will be 10,496-3-17½ and 11,310-3-17½

1773-1785		1785-1794		Total
Kantababu	Sa Rs. 14,711- 8-0	plus	Sa Rs. 481-0-0	Sa Rs. 15,192- 8-0
Lokenath	" 21,774- 5-6g	"	" 11,310-3-17½g	" 33,084- 9-3½g
-do- Nazar	" 5,001- 0-0	" Brindaban	" 423-0-0	" 5,424- 0-0
Benami	" 1,145-12-0		X	" 1,145-12-0
Baisnabcharan/others	" 526- 0-0	"	" 2,444-0-0	" 2,970- 0-0
	Ra. 43,158- 9-6		Ra. 14,658-3-17½ g	Ra. 57,816-13-3½ g

The precision in financial matters mark out Kantababu as one of the most important persons of his time. Yet he did not gather as much property as many of his compatriots. For instance, his total amount of property was less than those of Maharaja Nabakrishna, Raja Devi Sing, Dewan Gangagobinda Singh or Gocul Chandra Ghoshal, but his organisation was the strongest which sustained his properties throughout the vicissitudes of time. He always chose the best and remained satisfied with what he had.

It seems strange that he did not collect more properties particularly in the latter part of his life. His achievement as the Banian of the Governor General seems to be particularly restrained. He severely restricted himself to a limit which he never transgressed. That is why perhaps, his acquisitions in the first 30 years of his life turns out to be an equal half to the latter 21 years. There can be no doubt about the fact that Kantababu never took any undue advantage of his position, if he did his acquisitions would have shown it clearly. On the contrary it may be commented that he did not make full use of the opportunity as many of his successful colleagues did.

It is evident from the books of accounts of Kantababu that he had organised a satisfied household before becoming the Governor General's Banian. He had everything he wanted even then. So in the next 21 years he merely collected a house and lands in Calcutta spending Rs. 14,003 and a few choicest properties in the districts, seven of which cost him Rs. 21,541*. He seemed to be content with his situation and did not wish to over-stretch himself unnecessarily. This is another quality which is unique in Kantababu.

Kantababu collected property worth Rs. 1,15,823 at face value. in 51 years ranging from 1742 to 1794 with 176 deeds of sale and settlement. Tables are given in pages 107, 108, and 109.

The deeds of sale were also evenly distributed. 90 of the total 176 deeds were drawn in the name of Kantababu and others while the balance 86 deeds were made out in the name of Lokenath Nandy.

These personal properties acted as the sheet anchor not only in the acquisition of Zemindaries but also in managing them, where these private investments always secured a little more control and authority.

* 3 in Murshidabad including Dashazari, Baharbund the properties in Nadia, Faridpur & Rajshahi.

A detailed table of deeds of purchase between 1742-1794

	Murshidabad	Calcutta	Burdwan	Nadia	Birbhum	Maldah	Faridpur	Rajshahi	Dinajpur	Brindaban	Ballia
									& Rungpur	& Mathura	
In the name of Kantababu etc.	78	5	2	X	1	1	1	X	X	1	1
In the name of Loknath	77	X	2	1	X	X	X	1	4	1	X
Total :	155	5	4	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1

[illegible]

Murhi-Calcutta Bur- Nadia Bir- Mal- Farid- Raj- Rung- Brinda- dabad 24-Pargi. dwan bhun dah pur shahi pur Howrah Ballia	Total	English Year	B.S.
16	1	16+1	1180
9	1	9+1+1	1181
3		3	1182
1		1+1	1183
x	x		1184
3	1	3+1	1185
4		4+1	1186
1		1+1	1187
11		11	1188
4	1	4+1	1189
2		2	1190
8		8	1191
3		1 3+1	1192
x			1193
2	1	2+1+1+1	1194
x			1195
x			1196
2		2	1197
5		2 5+2	1198
8		8	1199
2		2	1200
Total	84	3 84+4+10 = 98	Total I

On the death of Kantababu Maharaja Loknath Roy Bahadur inherits the property

Murshi-Calcutta dabad 24-Parga. Howrah	Bur- Nadia	Bir- bhum dah	Mal- dah	Farid- pur shahi	Raj- Rung- pur	Brinda- ban Ballia	Total	English year	B-S-
×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	1793-94	1200
4	1	2	4	2	4	4	4	1794-95	1201
2			2		2	2	2	1795-96	1202
6			6		6	6	6	1796-97	1203
7			7		7	7	7	1797-98	1204
6			6		6	6	6	1798-99	1205
6			6		6	6	6	1799-1800	1206
3			3		3	3	3	1800-01	1207
5			5		5	5	5	1801-02	1208
1			1		1	1	1	1802-03	1209
2			2		2	2	2	1803-04	1210
×			×		×	×	×	1804-05	1211
Death of Maharaja Loknath Bahadur								Total II	
42	1	2	4	×	×	×	42+7+2	51	
Grand Total	126	5	3	5	1	1	3	149	Total of I and II

CHAPTER III

THE REVENUE FARMER AND THE PERMANENT SETTLEMENT ZEMINDAR 1773-1794

The salient features of this chapter have been already discussed under the chapter entitled 'The Governor's Banian'. Here the day to day strife in the Supreme Council will be discussed in detail and may be skipped by the lay readers unless they wish to brave through the boring and monotonous account. The events have been arranged chronologically in relation to each of the Farms that were held by Kantababu.

In Chapter four of the First Volume of this book it has been shown that Kantababu had acquired all his farms except one before the coming of Hastings as Governor General. Even that one Farm which he collected after the coming of Hastings, he relinquished in hot haste. The Majority took it upon themselves to discredit Hastings to the Court of Directors by trying to prove that all these Farms were the gifts of the Governor General to his Banian in total disregard of the rules laid down by the administrators of the Company. It became therefore important to Hastings to show that he had not granted his Banian any favour. Of the many arguments that were forwarded, one was that for the successful collection of Revenue it was necessary to give them to men of substance, integrity and efficiency. So the battle of words on Kantababu's Farms continued for sometime. Meanwhile the Majority tried to prove that there was discontent in almost all the Farms enjoyed by Kantababu, thereby insinuating that he was neither the man of worth or efficiency as had been considered so long. In the present discourse it will therefore be found that complaints against Kantababu from almost all his thirteen Farms started coming to the Council. The nature of the complaints as well as their championing by the Majority will be taken up in due course.

The unfortunate controversies undoubtedly put a check on Kantababu's wish to gain more Farms. Thus at the time of the departure of Hastings he was left actually poorer than at the time of the coming of the Governor. Add to this his losses in silk and salt business which he

had to stop because of unfavourable political conditions. It may be remarked that his Barianship of the Governor General was not beneficial to him financially.

In this Chapter the metamorphosis of the Revenue Farmer into a Permanent Settlement Zemindar will also be discussed. Erroneously it is believed that when the Permanent Settlement came into vogue, a new group of people were selected as Zemindars. It is also believed by some that the system was introduced by the English Company for their own advantage, which was an Indianisation of the 'Feudal System'. By examining the various reports and documents all these views are found to be wrong. The Permanent Settlement had nothing to do with the Feudal System but was an extension and modernisation of the system introduced in Bengal by Murshid Quli Khan. At best it was a reformed Mughal system with the 'permanent' part of it collected from the old Hindu right of the Zemindars in the pre-Mughal times. The research that was conducted in 1787-88 before introducing the system gives an insight to its motive and necessity. Even the word 'settlement' is an echo of the earlier one introduced by Murshid Quli Khan in 1722. The Zemindars were also not impostors selected at will by the administrators. Only those who were enjoying Zemindaries by an earlier settlement, Revenue Farmers and land holders were given the option of retaining 'Zemindary' right in lieu of payment of Revenue to the Government at a fixed rate within a specified time. The Permanent Settlement came into effect without any fanfare or a bombastic declaration of rights. The options from the men who were already holding those lands were recorded in which came to be known as 'D' Register* and the revenue of each of the properties were re-fixed and noted. Soon after the "Thak Records" were published which delineated the geographical boundaries of each property which appeared in the 'D' Register. The system though called permanent was still an experiment in land settlement and was retained because of its success. While the Mughal system granted 'Sunads' or 'Awabs' or 'Jaigirs' in a grand manner, the Permanent Settlement came into effect without any of these, the only bill of right being, the rather badly printed register and the several sheets of settlement papers, brown and coarse. At the time of its introduction it

* 'A' Register — Public buildings, lands etc.
 'B' ,, — Revenue free lands.
 'C' ,, — Ferry, River, Roads etc.
 'D' ,, — Zemindary.

was just another settlement operation which came as the natural consequence of the three-year and then the five-year settlements. Neither the new Zemindar nor the administration felt that they were doing anything extraordinary. Rather in a typical British manner the new system was considered as a stitching operation of the old Hindu right of the Zemindars with the Mughal system of responsibility for the payment of the Revenue. Penalty measures were introduced for terminating the Zemindary of the defaulter.

For most of the Zemindars this became a business. Many of them relinquished some of their properties to run the others better. The more efficient ones started buying Zemindaries of the defaulters at the Revenue Sale. Soon it was the efficient who survived and increased their profit to buy more Zemindaries, while the weak lost them. Never in recent times was the survival of the fittest demonstrated so dramatically as it was in the first fifty years of the permanent settlement. The Sunset laws were severe but efficient. If the Revenue was not paid by sunset of a stipulated date, the Zemindary was put on auction sale and became the property of the highest bidder. There is no doubt that the Permanent Settlement led to a steady growth in economy. The competition of raising more revenue led to better administration by the Zemindar, who had constantly to improve the profitability of his properties by increasing land settlement each year. The first few years of the Permanent Settlement is therefore a most interesting study in all respects.

Kantababu had been enjoying the Farm of thirteen properties (see lists in Vol. I ch. IV p, 49-50) before the coming of Hastings. During the period between 1773 to 1779 there was no controversy about four of them, these being Taherpur, Samaskhali, Kasheepur and Jehanhuttee. Of the other nine the dispute on Hatinda was as a part of Jahangeerpur which was a huge area covering parts of what is now Asansol town and the Raniganj coal belt.

The 42 Parganas of Midnapore and Jellasore often known under the short title of Cotubpur (Kutubpur), taken and then relinquished in course of a short time, created a huge controversy in the Council. Some people not going into the details of the dispute have confused the 42 Parganas and Cotubpur as two separate properties. In fact the 42 Parganas of Midnapore and Jellasore comprised of Cotubpur and other

Parganas and Mahallas. The Bissenpore and Pachet controversy also raged for a long time.

To follow the order of the Farms, the Cantonagar dispute, though raised much later, will be discussed first and will be followed by the controversies in regard to Kantababu's Farms in Murshidabad.

The examination of the Farms of Kantababu by the Majority was the direct result of his refusing their summons. The proceedings of 20th March 1775 recorded the charge of contempt towards the Board by Kantababu, at his refusal to appear before it on the 13th March. The resolution was formally moved by General Clavering. Seconding the resolution Philip Francis remarked that "Cantoo Baboo, the Governor's Banyan is guilty of High Contempt, more so as the Majority is vested with the same powers as the whole Council."

Defending Kantababu, Hastings admitted however that Kantababu as a Farmer was amenable to the Board and was accountable for the Rents. Not being able to bring a charge of contempt against Kantababu, Clavering angrily retorted, 'I would take care that he answers for all the ballances, which may be due from him, for those immense Farms, which he has been suffered to relinquish to the amount of lacs of Rupees.'¹ These angry utterances were the source of Kantababu's troubles for the next few years. The Majority left no stone unturned to get hold of a fault in Kantababu's accounts. Their failure only made them more angry and spiteful. The list of Kantababu's Farms along with their jumma (total collectable amount) and collection (what was actually collected) was put up before the Board who examined every detail of its collection and management.

Cantonagar

The Board examined the Jumma which was fixed at Rs. 41,066-10-15-3 karas, previously it had been Rs. 34,876-11-11-3 karas. The Majority recorded that Lokenath Nandy was the Talookdar.² Now as the Pargana was directly under the Revenue Department, Lokenath Nandy petitioned for certain advantages that had already been granted to others. He wrote, 'The Chillanta or duties on goods passing by land and by water and the fees on marriage etc., have been remitted and abolished by the Government in conformity to which my Zemindary

¹Foreign Dep. Secret Proceedings of 20 March 1775. Vol. 27 & 12.

²Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 28 October 1776.

in the Zilla Calcutta had the same remitted in Revenue, but as for me, I have never received the least deductions on these accounts in any of my concerns or Zemindary. I have however from the produce of my lands and contracting debts, paid up the whole of the Government Revenue from the year 1179 till the end of 1182, but as 5 years are now nearly expired or the revenue of Government for the year 1183 being in demand from me and I being in debt to Money-lenders; I am therefore hopeful according to Justice, I may receive credits (agreeable to the accounts of my Zemindary) for the amount of these duties and I pray that until this matter be adjusted the demand be postponed for the Revenue of 1183, when after coming to a settlement of this affair, I will regularly pay whatever balances appear to be due from me.'³

Having no reply Lokenath Nandy presented another application, "I presented a petition to the Committee respecting the Chellunta Duties, which has been abolished by the Government and requesting I might be allowed a deduction on that account, in the Rents of the Purgunnah Cunttoo nugger, my Talook in consequence of which the Committee were pleased to order the Duan to give in his report. Two months however have elapsed, I have never failed to discharge my Rents in due time. My Vakeel is moreover in confinement. I am ever ready to discharge the just demands of the Government. The Duan gave in, his report on the 2nd March, purporting that at the time of making the settlement, the duties of the Sier Chellunta of Purgunnah Cunttoo nugger were not abolished, which is true, and I have received no deduction on that account, therefore request, the Seir of Chellunta etc. articles as hereafter particularised may be remitted me in my accounts and my Vakeel released."⁴ The accounts follow.

Year	Seir of the Chellunta	Duties of marriages	Fines for Offences	Total	Collected before the Orders were issued	Balance
1179 (as per accounting of 1178)	1452-10-11-2	747-13-0	1279-10-0	3480-1-11-2	932-3-13-0	2547-13-18-2
1180	1452-10-11-2	747-13-0	1279-10-0	3480-1-11-2	X	3480- 1-11-2
1181	1452-10-11-2	747-13-0	1279-10-0	3480-1-11-2	X	3480- 1-11-2
1182	1452-10-11-2	747-13-0	1279-10-0	3480-1-11-2	X	3480- 1-11-2
1183	1452-10-11-2	747-13-0	1279-10-0	3480-1-11-2	X	3480- 1-11-2
Grand Total	7263- 4-17-2	3739- 1-0	6398- 2-0	17400-7-17-2	932-3-13-0	16468- 4- 4-2

³Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 6 January 1777, p. 82-83

⁴Ibid., of 20 March 1777, p. 645-646.

The meeting of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue examined the demand of Rs. 16,468-4-4-2. They also found that the balance due from Kantababu for Cuntoonagar upto the end of Chayt came to Rs. 16460-9-15-3, against which Kantababu now claimed the identical amount on account of duties in grain etc. for 5 years. He submitted a detailed account also. The Duan was asked to examine both the accounts and report.⁶ In spite of the apparently simple problem none of the accounts were settled nor was the Vakeel, who was imprisoned for non-payment, set free. On 21 April 1777, J. Perring, Secretary wrote to G. G. Ducarel, the Superintendent of the Khalsa for full records with the Jumma and Hustabood of Cuntonagar. Ducarel wrote back on 8 May that there was no Hustabood of Kantanagar amongst the Records of the Khalsa.⁶

The Duan's report recorded on the 3 July 1777 made a non-committal remark. He stated that the account of Seir Chellunta and Munrochah or fees on marriage amounting to Rs. 16860-9-15-3 was correct. Regarding the settlement he remarked that when the Murshidabad Bundibust was made from an inspection into the Jumma of the preceding year's Malguzarry or Revenue by the Committee there, the Seir Chellunta and Munrochah were remitted to no one. It was for the Committee to decide whether any remission would be granted in these accounts.⁷

Nothing happened; so Ram Sunker Surmah, Vakeel of the Pargana Cantonagar appealed to the Supreme Council.⁸

The Supreme Council immediately forwarded the petition to the Calcutta Committee of Revenue with the order to report on every aspect, particularly whether Gunga Govinda Singh had been allowed remission in his Cossimpore account.⁹ The Calcutta Committee of Revenue addressed a letter to Edward Baber, Chief of the Provincial Council of Revenue of Murshidabad for detailed information regarding the deductions. The Duan Gunga Govinda Singh was ordered to suspend the amount pending enquiry into the claims made by six Farmers. He was

⁶Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 31 March 1777. p. 793.

⁷Ibid., of 21 April and 8 May 1777. p. 1087 & 1252.

⁸Ibid., of 3 July 1777, p. 25 (typed)

⁹Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 5 August 1777, p. 3861-3870.

⁹Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 7 August 1777, p. 383-390.

also ordered to release the Vakeel of Cantonagar from confinement. The Committee made a list of the farms claiming remission on account of Chellunta duties and referred them to the district authorities. The six farms were :—

1. Mohobutpore and Bundercollah included in the Hustobood of District Hooghly.
2. Syedpore and Caulispore included in the Hustobood of District Jessore.
3. Mohammadshie included in the Hustobood of District Jessore.
4. Iusoufpore included in the Hustobood of District Jessore.
5. Sumusair Budderpore included in the Hustobood of Murshidabad.
6. Cantonagur included in the Hustobood of District Murshidabad¹⁰

On 12 August 1777 Hastings, in the face of bitter opposition from Clavering and Francis, recommended the deductions for the approval of the Court of Directors.¹¹

On 22 September 1777 Lokenath Petitioned again, 'I have ever paid in the rents of my Farm of Cantonagar to Government, without deficiency for 5 years to the end of 1183 and hope you will grant me receipts for those payments under your hands.

'The rent of the Farm from the beginning of the present year 1184 is now called according to the former Kistibundy; but as this is the beginning of a new Bunderbust I hope that the said Chellunta, Moracha and other articles remitted by Government and which I do not collect from Riots may be erased out of the doul Bunderbust and the Kistibandi settlements that I may make my payments accordingly'.

'Resolutions on the Petition

Article 1— Agreed that Receipts be granted the petitioner for such payments as he has made in the course of the last 5 years on account of the above Talook.

Article 2— The Committee observe that the claims made by the Talookdar are under the consideration of the Board, that as soon as they finally determine thereof; they will either comply or reject the Petitioners request accordingly.¹²

¹⁰Ibid., p. 390-391.

¹¹Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 12 August 1777, p. 3888-3889.

¹²Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 22 Sept. 1777,

The course of events were unfavourable to Kantababu. As Hastings was contemplating resignation, his position became even more precarious. To gain the favour of the Majority, who the servants of the Company felt would become their masters in a short while, unprecedented harsh attitude was taken towards the Vakeel of Cantonagar. On 3 October 1777 the Calcutta Committee recorded :—

‘Cantonagar—The Taluak of Lucknaut Nundy
 Jumma of the year 1183 Rs. 41,066-9-15-1
 Medium collections of the years 1180, 1181 and
 1182 Rs. 41,066-9-15-1
 The Vakeel of this Mahal is attending, is asked if he will give the Jumma of 1183 as above stated; he replies, that he will after deducting the sum of Rs. 3484 account Seir Chellunta Duties, ordered to be suspended by the Supreme Board. The Committee observe, that as this article has been ordered to be suspended and is yet not finally determined, it must be an article in the Talookdar’s Cabooleat, that if the claim be hereafter resumed, he will pay the full amount during the current year and the annual claim to his Jumma and Kistibundy. Ordered that he do execute his Cabooleat accordingly.’¹³

Nothing happened. The Vakeel of Kantababu attended the Calcutta Committee on 1 December 1777 and saw a reference being made in regard to the Seir Chelluntha to the Murshidabad Council of Revenue. The Murshidabad Committee wrote back on the 15 December that they were unable to supply the necessary information, which was communicated to the Vakeel on 23 December. Yet on 24 December the Calcutta Committee ordered that if the full amount due for the Augun Kist was not paid immediately by the 15, the Vakeel should be taken into custody.¹⁴

Nothing is known about this affair for almost another year. On 21 August 1778 the Revenue Board agreed to allow remissions to those who had the article mentioned in their *doul Pattahs*. But this resolution did not help Kantababu at all, as it was specially resolved on 26 August 1778, that as the claims of Kantababu for Syer Chelluntha were referred to the decision of the Hon’ble the Court of Directors in their

¹³Ibid., of 3 October 1777, p. 25 (typed).

¹⁴Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 1 December, 23 & 24 December 1777, p. 701, 812, 835 (typed).

letter of 20 November 1777 and as all other claims for remissions on these prohibited articles are founded on the same principles, the Governor General submitted to the Board the propriety of directing that they shall all remain in suspense until the receipt of the Orders from the Court of Directors.¹⁵ Orders were passed accordingly. The Calcutta Committee resolved on 22 September 1778, 'Agreed that all claims for the remission of the Farmers and Zemindars on account of Syer Cheluntah etc. during the period of 5 years leases from 1179 to 1183 inclusive, to 'remain in suspense till Orders of the Court of Directors shall have been received on the reference already made to them'.

'Syer Cheluntah claimed by the following Zamindars and Farmers :

Cantonagar	—	Rs. 16460
Syedpore	—	„ 7234
Mohabatpur	—	„ 2722
Basdebpore	—	„ 2509
Hutcundah	—	„ 25
Pygotty	—	„ 1400
Rajabarry	—	„ 1225
Tallokdars of Jessore	—	„ 1800' ¹⁶

As the power of the Majority dwindled, the sordid episode came to an end. Lokenath on 30 July 1779 appealed that the collection of the Talook Cantonagar may be transferred from under the Calcutta Committee of Revenue and placed directly under the Khalsa as it had been previously. The papers were circulated. Francis and Wheler returned them with the word 'Seen' scribbled, but desisted from making any remarks. Barwell saw no objection in complying to the request. Hastings accordingly ordered that henceforth the rent of Cantonagar be paid into the Khalsa directly. Presumably the deductions were fully allowed.¹⁷

Thus ended the troubles in regard to Cantonagar. The rents were paid regularly and Lokenath was able to enjoy his property without any further trouble throughout the lifetime of his father and his own. Cantonagar became as it always had been the base of operation of Kantababu and Lokenath.

¹⁵Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 21 and 26 August 1778, p. 72 & 91 (typed).

¹⁶Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 22 September 1778, p. 203 (typed).

¹⁷Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 30 July 1779, p. 149-159 (typed).

The other Farms and Zemindaries belonging to Kantababu in Murshidabad were also subject to different types of trouble. All the controversies came to a pitch between 1775 and 1777 then dwindled into oblivion. Of the Murshidabad Farms there is no trace of any allegations in regard to Samaskhali, Kasheepur and Jehanhuttee or Jeharhuttee or Jeecur Hattee.* The controversies in regard to Chunakhali, where Kantababu's home in Cossimbazar was situated and where he collected most of his personal properties, will be discussed first and will then be followed by those of Mankar and Coolberia.

Chunakhali

The innocent demand for the deduction of rent came from the Farmer of Chunakhali, Baisnabcharan Nandy whose father Nrisingha Nandy was a personal friend of the Collector of 'Chunacolly' James Irwin, later becoming also his security in his silk business with the Company (1777). The letter of Irwin was read in the Board of Revenue on 4 June 1773. 'Boostorchurn Nundy, Farmer of Chunacolly etc. has given a list for which he demands a deduction of Malguzzary, alleging that as a Farmer he has no obligations to discharge the Zemindary charges and Ameen's Expenses, disbursed while the latter was in the Mofussil to which no other Zemindar has made the least objections, the lands included in the Goreepore Romnah are possessed by the Begum'. Other Farmers followed the lead of Baisnabcharan and in his letter of 18 May 1773, Irwin faithfully referred all the petitions. The Council at the Fort William replied on 4 June. 'On Boostirchurn Nundy's claim: If the charge of Aumeens for the pay of whom, the Farmers claim deductions are those persons who were appointed by the Council of Revenue at Murshidabad you must settle them in general as you shall think just and give the Farmers credit for the amount, writing it off under the head of Charges Collection. The article of Zemindar's servants wages in Chunacolly, the Farmer must settle with the Zemindars in, adjusting with them the account of their 10 per cent allowances. The deficiency in the remittances made to the Khalsa, the Farmer must himself settle with the officers of the Treasury.

'With respect to lands included in the Romna at Goreepore said to be possessed by the Begum, we desire you apply to the Resident at the Durbar and get it thro' his means adjusted, what rents shall be paid by

* the last name seems more probable.

the Begum for the lands she possesses provided the Jumma of them was included in the Farmer's Account Settlement'.¹⁸

Nothing further is known about the Farmer's dispute with the Zemindar. Suddenly the complaints of the Zemindars reached the Revenue Board on 28 June 1775. The allegations are also not limited to the petty payments referred to earlier but take a very wide range. Oddat Chand, Anand Chand and Gullawb Ram, Chaudhuris of the Pargana Chunakhali, complained through their Vakils. 'The Pergunnah of Chunna Cowlee has been in our possession for nearly one hundred descents. By our vicinity to Murshidabad we have been dispossed of several parcels by divers persons, nevertheless with much difficulty we paid our Kists. In 1169 we gave a responsible security to the Mutsuddies of Murshidabad for the Bundibust of the said Pergunnah. At this time Cantoo Baboo without our knowledge took this Pergunnah to himself and from the beginning of 1179 to the end of 1181 exacted beyond the Bundibust of the Committee, the sum specified in the accompanying paper and greatly laid waste and depopulated the country inclusive of this for the three villages of Bhatah, Mhuepur (?) and Kanksa, consisting of 900 Bighas; further villages of Shujahpore, Behivanind and Gokulmattee. He forced an agreement and took them to his own use. We are now helpless and except from expecting of Justice...(etc). We are hopeful that you will restore the Pergunnah from the Baboo to us, also the sums he has exacted above the Bundibust of the Committee and the land and villages he has unjustly taken from us, that we may perform our agreement to the Company'.

The Chaudhuries also presented the accounts of the Collection of Chunakhali, which they twisted in such a manner as to support their contention. 'Accounts of the Collections of Choona Caulee'.

Really collected—In 1179 — Rs. 28,059- 0- 0		Collection according to Zemindars	
		Register ...	Rs. 24,701- 0- 0
in 1180 —	Rs. 36,624-11-11	...	„ 31,947- 5- 4
in 1181 —	„ 31,595-12- 6	...	„ 23,721-13-15
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	Rs. 96,279- 7- 1		Rs. 80,370- 2-19

The Zemindars' complaint was that an overcollection of Rs. 15909-4-2 had been made by Kantababu in the three years referred to above. They also alleged that this over collection had not been paid to the Company.

¹⁸Board of Revenue Proceedings consisting of the whole Council of 4 June 1773, p. 44-51.

On being pressed about the items, they reluctantly agreed that their registers were not updated after the recent rise in the quantum of revenue. The particulars of the revenue collected established the misrepresentation made by the Zemindars.

Particulars of the Revenue collected :—

In 1179 from the Zemindars	—	Rs. 24,700- 0- 0
„ 1180 „ „ „	—	„ 21,847- 5- 4
„ 1181 „ „ „	—	„ 21,097-13-15

Received from Cantoo Baboo and others as the price of the villages Bhatah etc. in 1180 — Rs. 5,700- 0- 0

Received from the sale of Mango trees etc. in the years 1180 and 1181 — Rs. 2,825- 0- 0

Received from the debt of Merchants — Rs. 4,200- 0- 0 — Total Rs. 80,370- 2-19

Particulars of what was collected and not entered in the Register:—

Payment of Cantoo Babu's aumils	—	Rs. 4,194-14-15
Payment of Munee Begum for Romna	—	Rs. 8,343- 0- 0
Payment of the Dutch for Calcapore in 1181	—	Rs. 3,371- 5- 5 — Total Rs. 15,909- 4- 2
		<hr/> Rs. 96,279- 7- 1

So the account squared off. The amount that was already paid into the Treasury was as follows:—

in 1179 —	Rs. 20,512- 5-13	
in 1180 —	Rs. 18,711- 0- 0	
in 1181 —	Rs. 19,971-13-6½	Rs. 59,195-2-19½
Balance due for the three years was		Rs. 37,084-4- 1½
		<hr/> Rs. 96,279-7- 1

Giving the grand total of

The details of the outstanding balance was as under :-

From Cantoo Baboo and his aumils	— 1179 —	Rs. 4,765-10- 7
	1180 —	Rs. 15,132-10-11
	1181 —	Rs. 5,471- 9-8½
From Munee Begum for each of the the 3 years 2781		Rs. 8,343- 0- 0
From the Dutch at Calacpur for 1181 only		Rs. 3,371- 5- 5
		<hr/> Rs. 37,084- 4-1½

The allegations brought against Kantababu in regard to Chunakhali thus failed completely in its purpose. Angry Clavering immediately charged Hastings of supressing information in regard to his Banian as

this Farm was not included in the list which was sent to the Court of Directors. The Governor General replied that the list sent to the Court of Directors contained the principal farms held by Kantababu. He was aggrieved by the manner of speech used by Clavering, and retorted that neither he nor his Banian had performed any criminal deed by taking the Farm. He had made his Banian relinquish some of the Farms but most of them were taken before his arrival. Explaining the payment necessitated by Munny Begum, Hastings pointed out that the large tract of open ground known as Romna was appropriated solely to the Nawab's use for feeding of antelopes.¹⁹ The enquiry into the complaints preferred by the Zemindars was being pursued by James Grant even as late as December 1775.²⁰ Before any report was forthcoming Ganesht Thakur the Vakeel of the Zemindars of Chunakhali lodged another complaint on 2 April 1776, 'That Cantoo Baboo of the above district demanding unjustly Revenue from Zemindars and having put over there about twenty peons for it, the Zemindars had paid their Revenue to him according to the settlement made by the Committee or Deputation. The aforesaid Cantoo Baboo forces not only that but flogging the officers or servants belonging to the Zemindars by which means the inhabitants were running away.

'Therefore your petitioner most humbly prays your Honour etc. will be pleased to grant him a letter to the Council of Revenue for the redress desiring them to settle the accounts according to the settlement of the Committee and to order Cantoo Baboo to recall his peons'. The Majority for once was not agitated and Edward Baber was transmitted a copy of the petition with an order to enquire into the allegations made by the Zemindars of Choonacally.²¹

The two reports of Grant and Baber could have proved to be very interesting indeed. If the claims of the Chunakhali Zemindars were true then the sharp struggle between the traditional Zemindars with the Farmer would have cast interesting light on the social, political and economic situation of the two parties. It would have been possible to know how the emerging Farmer slowly overshadowed the old Zemindars. Unfortunately none of the reports is available, it is not even known whether they were ever produced. Nothing further is known about

¹⁹Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 28 June 1775, p. 2986-2989.

²⁰Ibid., of 22 December 1775, p. 6108-6109.

²¹I.O.R., Bengal Revenue Consultations, Range 49 Vol. 61 of 2 April 1776, p. 6-7.

the Zemindars or their dispute with Kantababu. The allegations take a fixed pattern of approach again and again, as will be seen in this chapter, that, one is tempted to consider these to be cooked, sponsored and engineered by the same interested persons.

Lokenath however did not spare the Zemindars who were shown in his accounts of 30 July 1779 as having an arrear dues of Rs. 38,642-7-18-3 upto the end of 1183,²² which was the third highest demand in his accounts. The names of the debtors were also clearly written, they were Annunt Chand Roy, Oude Chand Roy and Golab Roy or in other words the initial complainants. The Chunakhali trouble thus ended favourably for Kantababu.

Coolberia

Almost identical complaint was lodged by one of the Talookdars of Coolberia almost on the same date of the second complaint from Chunakhali. The manner and language are so similar that it could have been drafted by the same pen. On 26 April 1776 the petition of 'Rooder Persaud, Talookdar of Mouza Modhoopur in the Purgunnah of Coolberia' was read. He alleged, 'In the year 1179 Bengal style, that one Contoo Baboo who took the Farm of the Purgunnah of Coolberia from the Committee of Revenue, but he, the said Cantoo Baboo has forcibly took the Rents and sold the trees that bears the fruits and he took more from your Petitioner than the Establishment'... 'Company allowed to your petitioner 10% for the Mousarah, but Cantoo Baboo refused to pay...and he falsely confined your petitioner'. He prayed that the Company may order Kantababu to pay his Mousarah or monthly allowance which he estimated to a total of Rs. 1600 and also the value of his trees forcibly cut down. He also prayed that his taluk Madhupur may be separated from Coolberia and joined with his other Taluk in Balarampur. Rudra Prasad assured that he will give security and pay his revenues regularly directly to the Sudder Zilah at Murshidabad. This petition also did not evoke any altercation of speeches in the Supreme Board and was sent to Edward Baber for report.²³

Unlike the Chunakhali complaint the full report of the Revenue Council of Murshidabad headed by Edward Baber and assisted by

²²Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 30 July 1779, p. 151.

²³I.O.R., Bengal Revenue Consultations. Range 49, Vol. 61 of 26 April 1776 p. 310-313.

Maxwell and Anderson is available which unfolds a very interesting picture. The letter of 1 August 1776 from Murshidabad stated, 'In obedience to your Order of 26th April, directing us to make strict enquiry into the complaint of Roodoo Persaud, Talukdar of the Mouza Modhoopore in Purgunna Coolberia we called upon the Farmer who has delivered in the accompanying answer which we have the Honour to enclose; but as the complainant is still in Calcutta we take the liberty of requesting (that) he may be sent up to us that we may proceed on the Enquiry you have been pleased to direct us to make into the affair'. 'Enclosure—The Arzee of Jugal Kishen, Vakeel of Kishen Kunt Baboo'. The petition followed. After carefully listing the complaints the Vakeel proceeded to answer them one by one. 'Rudra Persaud has from the first origin of his Taaluk been accustomed to pay his Malguzarry like the Muscoories of the Pergunnah among the Zemindar's collection, agreeably to this my Principal makes his claim and above this he pretends to no demand nor has he sold the trees.

'With respect to the monthly allowance the circumstances are as follows :

In the year 1179 at the making of the 5 years Bundibust, those Zemindars in the Zilla Murshidabad who would not accede in the presence of the Committee, to the same Malguzarry as was paid in 1178 of their own free will and accord, relinquished their Mahals for the sake of Korposh, a Bundibust was therefore made for farming of those Mahals agreeably to the Hustabood, and their allowances were fixed by the authority at 10 per cent. But such persons as did not relinquish their Mahals but were continued in their Zemindaries and managed themselves the Government's Malguzarry as heretofore, their Mahals were not included in the Hustabood and they consequently received no allowance and the profit and loss entirely rests with them. The Taaluks of the Muscoory Taalukdars in the Zilla Moorshedabad for which there was no Hustabood, pay their Malguzarry among that of the Chaudhurees of the Pergannah, for which reason, they receive no separate allowance, and there is no order that they should. The Chaudhurees of the Pergannah Coolberrea receive their allowance agreeably to the orders from my Principal. Rooder Persaud Taalukdar pays the established Malguzarry among that of the Chaudhurees of the Pergannah in the same manner as the other Muscoory Taalukdars of the Pergannah by Torahbundy, (or) in ready money and the profit and loss of the Taaluk rests with him. My

Principal has not entered his Taaluk in the Mofussil nor made any Hustibood of it without an order from the Huzoor, how is he to give him any allowance ?

'As for making the Taaluk Kharidge whatever was inserted in the Kabaula at the time of his purchasing the Taaluk of the Zemindar, he is to settle that with the Chaudhuries of the Pergunnah.

'On the face of the Accounts of 1182 there stands a balance against Rooder Persaud of 2500 Rupees on account of the Government's Revenue, when called upon he puts off from time to time the payment of this sum. For this reason I before pressed him to discharge it, in consequence of which he preferred a complaint to the Gentlemen of Moorshedabad and obtained an order to Rajah Doulat Roy. The Rajah was accordingly investigating the matter when Rooder Persaud, during the course absconded and Petitioned to the Supreme Court of Adawlut at Calcutta where the cause is depending.

'At this time Rooder Persaud has preferred a Petition to the Committee at Calcutta and brought an Order for the Gentlemen to examine the affair. Let him therefore attend the Gentlemen and let justice be done in the presence of both the parties. (A True Translation, signed Edw. Otto Ives, Persian translator.)'

The Roy Royan was asked to enquire into the matter of Rudra Prasaud and report.²⁴

The Vakeel's petition brings out certain practices of revenue settlements which were never clearly known before. The relation between the Farmer, the Zemindar and his Talukdars were clearly laid out. The Zemindar of a Pargana was known as Chaudhuri and often members of the same family were considered as Zemindars or co-sharers of the interest and were responsible for the payment of revenue. With the Permanent Settlement the Zemindar became personally responsible for the revenue, from being part of a unit he became an individual.

The report of the Murshidabad Council was sent on 31 October, but it was not considered by the Board till 10 December, 1776. Their

²⁴Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 13 August 1776, p. 2793-2800.

report stated, 'Rooder Persaud, Talookdar of the Mouza MODOOPUR, in the Pergunnah Coolbarreah, whom you were pleased to order up here hath accordingly waited on us and we have in obedience to your commands made the strictest enquiry into the particulars of his complaint. Both parties have attended our Board and in the presence of each different claims have been fully discussed. In order to state them clearly to you, gentlemen, we beg leave to recapitulate the heads of each of their representations.

'The Talookdar sets forth that the Pergunnah Coolbarreah was farmed by Bisnoochurn Nundee, on the part of Cauntoo Baboo. That he forcibly took the Rents—sold the trees and took more than was authorised by the Committee's settlement and that there is due to him 1600 Rs. on account of Karooposh.

'The Farmer not only denies his having taken more than his just demand, but also claims from Rooder Persaud 2500 Rs. amount of the Revenue; he denies also his claim to Karooposh (or allowance of 10 per cent) granted to Zemindars and Talookdars who have relinquished their Mahals, and lastly that the Talookdar pays his Malguzzarry like the rest of the Muscoory Talookdars without his interfering in the Muffussil or making any Hastabood. At the time of the Committee's settlement such of the Zemindars, as did not choose to rent their own lands, on the terms that were offered by others, were permitted to resign them for their subsistence. This was the case with the Zemindar of Coolbarreah but Rooder Persaud is only a Talookdar of this Pergunnah who pays a fixed Rent through the Zemindar, of course he is not entitled to any allowance and ought to pay his rents through the Farmer who stands in the place of the Zemindar.

'In regard to the next circumstance of the Farmer taking more than he was authorised, we have minutely examined both their accounts. The Muscoory Talookdars pay a certain fixed Jumma and as the name imparts, this Jumma is ascertained in the Khalsa Records. From these we find that the Farmer takes his claim on a higher Jumma than the Khalsa has fixed and that in the course of four years, there have been collected Rupees 441-14-10 more than the Khalsa Jumma, which accounts for the Farmer's asserting there is a Deficiency and the Talookdar claiming an overplus. We have therefore adjudged the above mentioned sum to be due to Rooder Persaud.

'It doth not appear that the Farmer hath committed any violence in the Moffussil or made a Hustabood of the Talook but that Rooder Persaud's Gomastah managed the collections and paid the Rents that he collected to the Farmer'.

There were once again no fireworks in the Board of Revenue and the report which apparently settled the dispute was allowed to be filed away.²⁵ The account of the 30 July 1779 showed the amount of Rs. 3611-6-7 as due from the Kutkenadars who were following the practice as in Chunakhali, of the Zemindars of the area.²⁶

Mankar

This rather tiny Pargana of Mankar sprang into prominence when Nawab Alivardi perpetuated the murder of the Maratha general Bhaskar Rao Kolhatkar popularly known as Bhaskar Pundit and 23 other Maratha generals in 1744. Now the Zemindars of Mankar who were also its Kutkenadars according to the prevalent practice, complained against the Farmer in the same manner as others. 'Sumbhoonaut Sing and Rungonaut Sing' stated that 'In Bengal year 1179 at the time of the Committee's Bundeabust, Lokenaut Nundy was accepted as the Malzamin at a Jumma of 1000 Rupees above that of the proceeding year. The Mahal was in an ill condition and was daily infested with Buffaloes, wild hogs and Tygers. The Malzamin dispossessed us and collected the Malguzzarry agreeably to the Hustabood allowing us our Mushahuar. In five years the Malzamin was a considerable loser'. They requested that a deduction of Rs. 2000/- per year may be allowed to them.²⁷ The total Jumma of Mankar in 1183 (1776-77) had been Rs. 11422-1-14-3 but the arrears due to the Farmer in 1789 were very high. So it can be concluded that neither the complaint nor the prayer for deduction held any water. As there are no further mention of the subject it can be assumed that the complaint was allowed to be dropped. The account of 30 July 1779 showed the 'total arrear demand to be Rs. 22001.'²⁸

The four Farms of Murshidabad against which disputes were lodged cannot be said to have created very much trouble for Kantababu. The nature of the complaints were similar and the amount involved was often

²⁵Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 10 December 1776, p. 5392-5401.

²⁶Ibid., of 30 July 1779, p. 151.

²⁷Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 16 July 1778, p. 3574-3577.

²⁸Ibid., of 30 July 1779, p. 151.

paltry. Only the Coolberia allegations ultimately boiled down to over-collecting a sum of Rs. 110-7-12-2 per year for four years mistakenly above the amount that should have been collected on account of revenue payment to the Government. It is also possible that these farms being in the home province of Kantababu the opposition could not be organised nor serious allegations engineered. The Majority also knew this and generally kept their peace regarding Kantababu's farms in Murshidabad. But for the vituperation of Clavering in the earlier stages of the dispute in regard to Cantonagar, the Majority saved their breath for more important matters and showed little interest in the allegations in regard to these farms.

Amberabad

The persistent trouble that Kantababu had to suffer in Amberabad overshadowed his difficulties in Murshidabad. Here the dispute arose from different sources culminating in the question whether Wordsworth, a Company servant on duty had taken bribe from the disputing parties. Before stating the complicated case chronologically, the changes in the management of the Farm may be recapitulated. Baishnab Charan Nandy was the initial Farmer whose name was by 1774 replaced by the name of Lokenath Nandy, who lodged a strong protest against the Farm being included in the Dacca Zilla and requested for retaining the right of paying revenue to the Khalsa directly. The Supreme Board agreed to the prayer and the revenue of Amberabad was allowed to be paid to the Khalsa directly and the district was not included in the Division of Dacca.²⁹ So from 17 May 1774 Amberabad collections once again came under the charge of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue whose President at the time was Philip Milner Dacres. Thus from 1181 Baisakh which corresponded to 10-11 April 1774 Amberabad became the responsibility of the Khalsa. Though Lokenath Nandy became the Farmer, the Izaradar was 'Bishnu Charan Nundy' throughout the tenure of the settlement³⁰ who also called himself 'Farmer' creating confusion all around.

On 6 February the Calcutta Committee recorded a petition from Baisnabcharan which also forwarded a letter written by the Aumil of the Pargana to Kantababu. Both the letters reveal the uncertain

²⁹Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 17 May 1774. O. G. No. 12, p. 230-234.

³⁰Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 17 March 1775, p. 1031.

conditions of the district as well as the current political situation. The petition went as follows:—‘Meer Hussein Ally who acts as my Agent in the Muffusull having been frequently reported by Aussur Wasil and Budder-ud-deen, Zemindars and proprietors of a part of the Pergunnah, to be dismissed from my employment, the business of the district often fell into confusion. On the last rumour, the servants of our agents were seized and the Zemindars and Talukdars absented. At this time Meer Hussein Ally having intercepted a letter which (he) was carrying from the Zemindars to the Vakeel Punchuram, he found it advisable from the contents of it to escape immediately to Dacca, from whence he sent me a letter and wrote me at the same time—a particular account of the state of the Muffussull, both of which I have now in my possession. Notwithstanding all this unwarrantable conduct of the Zemindars, I behaved with them with the greatest lenity, I collected from them the balance of last year by the end of Cautic (Kartick) rather by entreaty than by importunity and held the Poona (Punyaha) of the present year in Sawven (Sraban). The amount I have collected hitherto of the Revenue of the present year is small, my demand from them in the Muffussull is very large. I have never the less discharged the Sudder demand without a balance. Seeing therefore the obstruction which I experience from the Zemindars aforesaid together with their Vakeel Panchuram before my servants and to bring back Aubaudullah, the son of Autauwullah Zemindar and Proprietor also of the Purgunnah, who from the injustice of Assur Wasil and Badder-ud-deen, is fled to Dacca, whereby my people may, attend to the collection and be enabled to discharge their Malguzarry’.

With the petition was forwarded the letter from the Aumil of the Pargana Amberabad to Kantababu.

‘The arrival of your letter, of which I have fully made myself acquainted with the content, has conferred upon me honour and happiness. What have been the disturbances raised by the Zemindars and how they have absented themselves is known to all the World. I waited (for) several days with impatience in hope of a letter from the Presence and afterwards went to Dacca still expecting that the Zemindars would be brought to order. But I learn from you that their Vakeels have accused me of oppression. I declare that I have been far from oppressing them but have only demanded of them what is strictly due by the tenor of their Bundoobust. This therefore, I suppose is the great

oppression of which they complain. They have absconded in the month of Cautic and Augun (Kartick and Aghran), the very season of collection and their different Bundoobust is brought into one sum and regarded as due at the Presence, I have undoubtedly then a right to collect it. If they mean any other species of oppression, it is wholly false.

‘I have none on whom I can look for support but you, and you will know what the Bundoobusts are. If you will not favour me, how it is possible that I should collect money. At Moorsedabad you dismissed and restored me 7 or 8 times in the course of 6 or 7 months. Now it always happens in the Moffussil that if ever an angry word is spoken at the Presence, intelligence of it, finds its way there and make the business dead for six months.’ The aumil therefore entreated to be relieved. ‘I must therefore entreat you again to take my present case into your consideration and befriend me. While such are the transactions of the Durbar and such the behaviour of the Zemindars, how can I conduct the business. How can the Aumil be represented, the distance of the district is so great that I cannot receive an answer to my letter before 2 months. I therefore cannot collect. I request you will send a man immediately to take the business of out my hands. I have folded up again a letter from the Zemindars and now despatch to you together, with the man who had charge of it.’

Like the tales of the Arabian Nights one letter started another and the last proves to be the most interesting. This is the letter intercepted by the Aumil and referred to by Baisnabcharan in his petition. This letter from the Zemindars of Amberabad to their Vakeel Panchu Ram Majumdar shows how politically conscious the local Zemindars were. They knew that the new Gentlemen who were arriving from England were not well disposed towards Hastings and considered the time to be opportune to wrest the farm from the hands of Kantababu. The Aumil with a keen sense of survival felt that the letter be sent to the Farmer for disposal. Aumil being a Government servant in charge of collection was placed in a rough position if the Zemindars quarrelled with the Farmer. The letter was written in Bengali. This letter is a clear indication of how Zemindars and/or Talookdars tried to regain their power by ousting the Farmer whom they always resented. First the Zemindars of Amberabad wanted to know whether the English soliders who were to have arrived from the King of England have landed. Then they informed the Vakeel that they have picked up a dispute with Meer Hussein Ally,

who has drawn up an unfair account of expenses which he wants them to sign, if necessary by force and with this purpose in mind confines their Naibs and Mohurers. In spite of the dispute the Zemindars were nervous, they write, 'Yet it has been agreed amongst ourselves and our officers...that we had better not quarrel with a servant of Government while he holds office. We shall therefore send Shaik Saj-ud-deen, Saveer Cawn, Attaub-ud-deen, Rogoo Ram Monshee, Futta Mohamed, Rutnisser Chuckravarty etc. to you to learn whither the Power will remain as at present or not.' After a couple of lines the question was made more specific, 'But be you particularly careful to inform us in what manner the arrival of these new Gentlemen will affect Cantoo Baboo, whether when our deputies get to Calcutta there will be a possibility of getting the Farm out of his hands.' The last paragraph is an entreaty to the Vakeel to take lower charges this time for representing their case, an assurance that the deputies will be bringing money and his dues would be met immediately and a confirmation that all his old bills including the one at the Durbar has been fully paid.³¹

Even before Baisnabcharan's petition or the deputation of Zemindars could be taken up fresh trouble were brewing. Maharaja Nandakumar had on the 8 March 1775 made his historic allegations against Hastings. The power of the Majority seemed to have reached its zenith. Clavering in a flush of victory wrote to Henry Cottrell, President of the Provincial Council of Revenue on 7 April 1775, 'As we understand (that) Tajuddee, the Naib Zemindar of Absurivasil (sic.), Buduruddin and Tajubullah and sundry Ryots of the Purgunnah Amberabad have been confined by the Committee on the application of Cantoo Baboo, we desire to know what they have done, how long they have been in confinement and how long you propose keeping peons over them.' The Provincial Council interrogated the Naib Duan and it was revealed that 'Cantoo Baboo' had nothing to do in this matter and that the confinement was an executive order, the reason being, 'to have them at hand when required by the Committee. 'Mirda who had actually issued the order answered on being particularly questioned that he had received the orders to confine the Vakeels or Naib of the Amberabad Zemindars or Talookdars from the Committee.³²

³¹Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 6 February 1775, p. 137-140.

³²Ibid., of 10 April 1775, p. 37, 42-45.

By the end of the first week of May, Maharaja Nandakumar was put in prison and the Majority becoming involved with more important matters did not pursue the Amberabad affairs. Baisnabcharan's petition with all its enclosures went from the Calcutta Committee to the Provincial Council who simply forwarded them to the Board of Revenue, who in their turn asked the Supriintendent of the Khalsa to look into the dispute. In the meantime the deputies of the Zemindars had also arrived. So on 29 May 1775 the Revenue Department merely recorded the petition of Baisnabcharan and also a statement from the deputies. Now sure about the difficulty Kantababu was facing with the Majority the deputies stated that in 1179 Babu Kishen Kunt without the acquiescence of the Zemindars and the Talukdars took the lease of the Pargana in the name of Bishnoo Nandy, his nephew and appointed Bishnonaut Birje Comar, Gungaram, Meer Hussain Ally etc. one after another in the Muffusil where he collected the Revenue and Ijaradary Russon. They claimed that oppression was adhered to. They complained that 'Bisnoochurn has made a pretence of Revenue deficiencies and has caused peons to be placed upon us'.⁸³

While the complaints moved backwards and forwards in the Board of Revenue, Wordsworth, the Collector of Amberabad sent in his report about oppressive collection by the Shikdar. Wordsworth wrote on 29 May 1775 to the Board, 'A complaint being made against the present Shikdar Gepend (Gopendra?) Bucks of his having collected in the month of Bysack within the space of eleven days the sum of Ten thousand four hundred and fifty one Rupees (10451/-). I immediately called on him to verify the facts,...he acknowledged it but (said) that it was a part of the Balance of last year's due to Cantoo (35000) which sum he also said was the balance of 60000 Rupees as per agreement between Cantoo and the Zemindars, which sum he was directed by his master Cantoo, to collect'. Wordsworth expressed great dissatisfaction as the Shikdar answered to him in a haughty manner and informed the Board that he prevented himself from assaulting the Shikdar with difficulty. Wordsworth however pointed out the impropriety of collecting in such haste in the months of Chevt and Baisakh. He felt that the balance of the year before should have been added to the Kists of the present year and no heavy balance should have been collected in the season of cultivation.

⁸³Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 29 May 1775, p. 2195-2208.

The Supreme Board thought the matter to be fit for a debate. General Clavering moved a motion that the Shikdar may be imprisoned for his haughty behaviour. Francis agreed. Barwell pointed out that such action may be detrimental to public interest and involve the Government in private disputes. Monson opined that sufficient power should be given to Wordsworth to deal with the matter. Clavering now referred to the complaints of oppression by the Zemindars which was already before the Board for consideration. He did not miss the opportunity of pointing out that this farm was enjoyed by Cantoo the Governor General's Banian and that he had imprisoned 30 Ryots without any jurisdiction. The Governor General had to point out that imprisonment of certain persons was the result of an executive order which had nothing to do with Ryots, who had no part in this collection. The Shikdar was within his rights to collect the arrears of rents from the Zemindars. If any action is proposed to be taken in this matter no debts will be collected. Hastings referred to the impropriety of the conduct of the Shikdar. He commented that as Wordsworth has not quoted the impertinent words that the Shikdar has used, the charge could not be proved or a sentence passed on the matter. Hastings appreciated that Wordsworth avoided assaulting the Shikdar or even using opprobrious language. He urged the Board to examine the complaints of the Zemindars of Amberabad in detail. He agreed however to invest Wordsworth with the power to imprison the Shikdar if he thought fit and requested him to send the particulars of the balances of Rs. 35000 and Rs. 60000 referred to above. The Board demanded that the attested copies of the agreement between Kantababu and the Zemindars be forwarded to Wordsworth.³⁴

9 June 1775 recorded the translation of a letter from Kantababu to the Secretary of the Board, 'Your letter desiring me to transmit you the Cabooliat for the Mahal of Amberabad which I received from the Zemindars came to hand and give me pleasure. Sir, in the year 1179 this Farm was taken agreeable to the Committee's settlement in the name of Bishnochurn who sent a collector on his own part into the country and therefore no settlement for an underlease was contracted with the Zemindars and of course no Cabooliat was taken from them. In the year 1180 an under farmer was appointed with the consent of the Zemindars, to whom, I do not know, but perhaps they may have given something in writing'.³⁵

³⁴Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 7 June 1775, p. 2539-2543, 2546-2547, 2550-2553,

³⁵Revenue Department Proceedings of 9 June 1775, pp. 2650-2651.

Kantababu was fast getting into the most uncongenial atmosphere conceivable. By the end of the month everything he did was ordered to be investigated.

Wordsworth reported on the letter of Kantababu a copy of which was sent to him. He was greatly misled by the informations about Lokenath, Kantababu's son and confused him with Baisnabcharan who was then an young man of 31 years. Wordsworth wrote, 'Bisnochurn is a child and nephew to Cantoo and of course knew but little of matters relative to the Revenue.' The Collector of Amberabad insinuated that when according to the Canoongoes account, *Wasilautnama* of Rs. 97869-11-6 were collected and remitted to Kantababu, he must have been the principal person who cannot feign ignorance about the settlement. Moreover the *Mathoot* and the *Nerrick*, the collection of which was stopped by Committee, was collected in this instance in the years 1179, 1180 and 1181 the amounts being Rs. 17000, Rs. 16975 and Rs. 12600 respectively which are included in the *Wasilauts* of the several years.

Wordsworth in the course of his investigations came across an agreement between the Zemindar Abidullah and the Farmer Bisnocharan. This agreement clearly created the right of the Farmer to collect annually Rs. 60000. Highly displeased by this finding Wordsworth proceeded to decry its importance. The explanation given by him is very interesting indeed. He writes to the Board, 'I beg permission to offer the following remarks. It is evident that Cantoo's order in 1179, that Amberabad was given in Farm to Nursing a Talookdar at Rs. 129 per Tolah and the Rupee to be deemed only 2 annas worse than Arcot which is about $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Farmer (Cantoo) not finding this plan to answer, did in 1180 oblige the representative of Assur Wassil (Rogoo Ram) to sign an agreement in the name of his nephew Bisno Churn Nundee. The representative of Abdullah did also sign the agreement. Abdullah being an infant and Golam Hussain, Naib, meeting with Cantoo's protection, the latter in hopes of further favour, signed his consent to the Agreement, which was that they should pay Cantoo 60000 S^a Rupees for the year 1180, 1181, 1182 and 1183. The said agreement is now in the possession of Nursing, Cantoo's brother and father of Bisnochurn Nundee.' Wordsworth had to admit the existence of the agreement, but then he proceeded to write, 'There is also another paper in the possession of Meer Hussain Ally, Cantoo's Shickdar for 1180 specifying that Rs. 700 should be paid to him yearly. Meer Hussain Ally

did endeavour to force the Zemindars to pay 14000 Rupees annually, but they did not consent to this. Unless Subbur Mohammed was present, it is impossible for me to give you a more satisfactory explanation regarding this matter'.³⁶

Wordsworth tried to impress upon three salient features, (a) that both Baisnab Charan (in Persian Baisnab cannot be written and automatically turns to Bisno or Bisnob) the Farmer and Abdullah the Zemindar were children, (b) so the Agreement made in their names was not of much value, (c) therefore the collections made by Gopen Buxi and Meer Hassan Ali were illegal and oppressive. None of the arguments received much attention with the authorities in Calcutta who were in possession of better facts. Cottrell, the President of the Provincial Council of Revenue issued a *Perwanah* to Baisnabcharan to hold the *Punhya* ceremony. This information greatly angered Wordsworth who wrote in a futile effort to create panic, saying that the Zemindars would not allow the Farmer of Amberabad to hold the ceremony and asked for advice under the circumstance. The Secretary of the Board wrote to Wordsworth, that the Board would send orders to the President of the Provincial Council to enforce his *Perwanah* to the Farmer for holding the *Punhya* ceremony and will ask C. W. B. Rous, President of the Provincial Council of Dacca to enforce his Fouzdarry Jurisdiction so that there be no disturbance from any quarter. Rous was however given clearer instructions, 'Great inattention is shown by the Zemindars to the Purwanah,...we require you therefore immediately to issue peremptory command to the Zemindars of Amberabad...enjoining strictest obedience to such instruction'. The Board also alerted Cottrell ordering that, 'we are informed by a letter received from Mr. Wordsworth that the Zemindars of Amberabad will not permit the Farmer of that Pergunnah to comply with the Orders issued to him by your President for holding the Pooneah. We desire therefore that he will immediately enforce his Purwanah by such means as he shall judge most effectual'.³⁷

If Wordsworth's intention had been to stop the function by frightening the Board, his plan completely misfired and gave such an advantage to the Farmer which he could not have achieved by any other means. Instead of helping the cause of the Zemindars, Wordsworth's action completely destroyed their case. The *Punhya* ceremony was held

³⁶Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 18 August 1775, p. 3753-3757.

³⁷Ibid., p. 3758-3766.

with eclat with soldiers from Dacca and the representatives of several Provincial Councils in attendance.

Though the Board overruled Wordsworth's patronage of the Zemindars they did not neglect the suggestions about land settlement. It was evident that in this sphere the knowledge of Wordsworth was very specialised. The Secretary to the Board therefore replied, 'The Board do not understand what he means by fixing the Revenue at 135 Rs. per tolah on a Jumma of Rs. 800. They therefore cannot give him any precise answer to his proposal on this subject, but are willing to confide in him for fixing the payments of the Ryotts to the Talookdars and the Talookdars to the Zemindars, on such Terms as shall appear to him most just and equitable, both with respect to the general usage of the Pergunnah and their particular Engagements...The Board mean by this, no more than so to regulate the Muffussil or internal collection as to prevent the Zemindars or other agents from oppressing the people...The Board cannot yet authorise him to appoint a permanent Shickdar, not knowing how far it may affect the Constitution of the country or the rights of the Zemindars, but they have the subject under their contemplation and will transmit him their Orders hereafter...The Board being determined to suppress by the most rigorous punishment the lawless practice of levying duties at the Zemindary Chowkies, direct that, if any Zemindars are convicted before Mr. Wordsworth of authorising *chowkies* for levying duties or taxes on goods or any persons and collecting the same, he will take the collectors into custody and report the Board his proceedings in every case of this kind, waiting the Board's orders thereon and he must forbid in the most public manner all such practice, declaring that Government will treat as Decoits or public robbers all persons who shall be detected in levying duties on articles of Trade excepting the authorised Custom of the Ganges.'³⁸

The reply to the questions raised by the Board establishes William Wordsworth as one of the Revenue experts of the time. His study of detail provides the opportunity of knowing the prevalent system rather minutely, notwithstanding his prejudice against Kantababu which never had the opportunity of being rationalised. Kantababu, himself an expert in Revenue matters, took the fullest advantage of Committee's ignorance, taking the Farm of Amberabad in the name of Baisnabcharan at a rather

³⁸Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 18 August 1775, p. 3758-3761.

lower rate. Wordsworth's report leaves no doubt about this. Wordsworth reports, 'As I conceive the several accounts I have lately had the honour to transmit to your Board relative to Amberabad and Bulloca to be diffusive, I am now, Gentleman, to beg your attention to the following summary account of the said Pergunnah, the former of which was let in farm by the Committee to Cantoo Baboo in the Bengal year 1179 or Christian year 1772. The asslih jumma and deductions of Amberabad stood in 1172 or 1767 as per my account transmitted the 1st July and was reduced in 1178 or 1171 as per said account. I am of the opinion, this Pergunnah contains near 5000 Dhons of land, mostly cultivated, indeed from the several informations I have received, the whole is cultivated, the rate of the Pergunnah is for every 4 Dhons one Rupee, which is called one-Rupee-jumma, (Asslih jumma is the original valuation of the Pergunnah which in 1174 Bengal Style was 1032 Rs. A Dhon is 48 Beghas) each Dhon consisting of 16 cannies and each cannie 3 Beghas allowing the Tolah to be fixed at 120 Rupees, upon the net jumma. (A cannie, 3 Beghas, Tolah the Rupee jumma on which there is collected yearly 120, 149 or 155 Rupees agreeable to the caprice of the Farmer or Zemindar). Specific in the aforesaid amount (928-12-3) there will be a Revenue per annum of Poora Rupees 1,10,851 or Sicca Rupees 83,139, but no certainty of Revenue can be ascertained till pottahs are granted to the Ryotts particularising what they are to pay to the Talookdars and those pottahs Registered in the Cannongoes office and public (sic) cutcheries.

'The present rate collected on the Ryotts are as follows :-

Viz.— 1. land per cannie of 3 Beghas	7 Rs.	Or per Dhon	Rupees	112
2. Do Do Do	5 Rs.	„ „ „		80
3. Do Do Do	4 Rs.	„ „ „		64
4. Do Do Do	3 Rs.	„ „ „		48

'The medium for the aforementioned rate is 4 Rs. 12 annas per cannie or per Begha 1 Rs. 9 as 4 pies or 76 Rupees per Dhon. Cantoo Baboo's motive for fixing the Tolah @ 149 and 155 Rupees must have proceeded from the knowledge he had of the rates fixed upon the ryott and further that suffering the Pergunnah to contain only 4000 Dhons instead 5000 Dhons, that there would be still a Revenue collected from the Ryotts of Poora Rupees 1,92,000 or Sicca Rupees 1,46,360. Cantoo says he took the Pergunnah agreeable to the Committees settlement; allowing he did, he must have deceived them or they knew little of what they were doing as must evidently appear from the following estimation. He farmed this

Pergunnah in 1179 or 1772 @ 36127 Sicca Rupees and fixed the Tollah on a medium at 149 Rupees, upon a Jumma of 720 Rupees, according to which rate his collection, every deduction being allowed, is Sicca Rupees 70,806, To accomplish this the Zemindars were suffered to reduce the proper jumma (923) Rupees to the aforesaid 720, whereas had he fixed the Tollah at 120 Rs. upon the jumma of 923 Rupees he would have relieved the inhabitants of a decrease of Jumma of 200 Rupees and have collected Poora Rupees (Poora Rupees bear about 25 per cent to make them Sicca) 1,10,960 or Sicca Rupees 83,070, Four thousand Dhons are Beghas 1,92,000 deduct the charity land, Jagirs etc. as per my account transmited the 1st July about 20,000 Beghas, there yet remains Beghas 1,72,000. Cantoo held this Pergunnah on a medium of Sicca Rupees 37000, which is at the rate of 3 annas 6 pies Sicca per Begha, while the Ryotts have been paying Re. 1-0-3 pies per Begha.'

Wordsworth grudgingly also admits that, 'It may be advanced in Cantoo's favour, that he farmed the Pergunnah of the Committee, who at their own pleasure, put him in possession, this undoubtedly in some degree exculpates him and would, if he had held the Pergunnah even at 2 as. per Begha. Yet I cannot think but the interest of the Company has been shamefully neglected by the Committee and that at the end of the 5 years or before the value (of) the Pergunnah should be strictly investigated.' Cantoo's charges (of) collections of 1179 are upon Poora Rupees 89,694 (is) Rupees 15,969. I cannot conceive that he should be entitled to more than 5 per cent whereas he has charged at the rate of $16\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Neither does it appear to me that his charges (of) Collections are by any means justifiable. Allowing him but 5 per cent exclusive of the sum paid to the Zemindars and Poora Rupees 787 to defray the expence of guards to the boundaries of the Pergunnah, which deduct from the aforesaid amount Poora Rupees 89,694 etc. ditto batta 25 per cent, the remainder is Sicca Rs. 61,127, the net sum received by the Farmer, Cantoo Baboo, from which deduct the Company's Bundabust Sicca Rupees 36,137, the net profit to the Farmer in 1179 was Sicca Rupees 25,000.' In his enthusiasm to make out a case against Kantababu, Wordsworth forgot to allow him any deduction for collection, which at $16\frac{1}{2}$ per cent as charged by Kantababu leaves a profit of Rs. 13,935. Even if the collection charges are deducted at 5 per cent plus the expence of the guards to the boundaries, as arbitrarily fixed by Wordsworth even then the profit from the province does not exceed Sicca Rupees 21,176. The charges on account of the Zemindars, which Wordsworth later

admits should also be deducted from the above figures, which leaves the profit figures according to Kantababu to Rs. 10,605 and according to Wordsworth to Rs. 17,846.

The interesting report of Wordsworth should be read fully. 'Cantoo', he continues, 'in 1179 fixed the Tolah @ 155 Rupees, which is Revenue per annum Poora Rupees 1,11,600 or Sicca Rupees 83,800. From this sum deduct charges collection etc. on account of the Zemindary Sicca Rupees 3330 etc., Collection charges of Chowkeydars to guard the boundaries of the Pergunnah, there still remains Sicca Rupees 75, 869 which would have been collected by Cantoo had not the Zemindars strenuously opposed him, and reduced his profit to the aforementioned sum (25000 Sicca Rupees). I cannot think the Farmer so culpable as the Committee who gave him the Farm. For had they enquired into the Moffussil accounts, they would have found that the gross collections so far back in 1177 were 1,03,639 Poora Rupees upon which 25 per cent Batta and charges of collection and collections on account of the Zemindars Sicca Rupees 3330 and Sicca Rupees 691 as charges Chowkeydary, the net sum remaining is Sicca Rupees 69,822 which is near the sum Cantoo demanded of the Zemindars (Sicca Rupees 60000 per annum). From this collection it is evident, Cantoo must have had a thorough knowledge of the Pergunnah or he could not have made an estimation so correct. Cantoo's amount collection in 1180 was Poora Rupees 97,869, deduct collection charges at 5 per cent and 5 per cent on account of Zemindars and Poora Rs. 787 charges Chowkeydary and Batta, the net Revenue is Sicca Rs. 67,453; out of his sum Government has received Sicca Rs. 37,557. The net gain of the Farmer is Sicca Rupees 29,876. Exclusive of the aforesaid amount collection, there was collected by the Zemindars 10,000 Poora Rupees or Sicca 7616 which makes the net amount collected in 1180 Sicca Rupees 75019.'³⁹ Without disputing the figures placed by Wordsworth if the collection charges as allowed by the Committee at $16\frac{1}{2}$ per cent is deducted or $11\frac{1}{2}$ per cent reduced, from the collection then the profit of the Farmer comes down to the vicinity of only Sicca Rs. 20000 and not more.

The Board had their misgivings about the report. The accounts were too complicated for working out the sums. The Majority is not found, as would have been considered normal under the circumstances,

³⁹Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 3 November 1775, p. 5543-5549.

taking this opportunity to deride Hastings of another action of favour tantamounting to misdemeanour. They rather quietly called Wordsworth and questioned him. This seems unusual as the period is marked by the stinging debate on Oudh, recorded in the secret Committee Proceedings. Probably the death of Nandakumar, who could have pointed out the volatile nature of this well written report of Wordsworth, was the reason of this neglect. The potential trouble-shooter was left awaiting, to cool his heels. The question and answer session is however interesting from the point of view of understanding the prevalent structure of revenue system.

‘Mr. Wordsworth answers the Board :

Q. 1. Why did the Talookdars complain of Zemindars reducing Jumma ?

Answer : Because it increased the Tolah upon them.

Q. 2. How does the reduction of the Jumma necessarily increases the Tolah ?

Answer : It increases the Tolah because 1,11,000 Rupees could not be produced upon a Jumma of 700 Rupees at 120 Rupees per Tolah, but in case the Tolah is multiplied by 155 Rupees, it will amount to 1,11,900 Rupees nearly.

Q. 3. Your meaning is that, as the Jumma in Tolahs is ideal, it is necessary that the amount of actual Jumma in Rupees should be produced from the joint operation of the amount and rate of the Tolahs ?

Answer : Yes.

Q. 4. Still it does not appear why the Talookdars should complain; The Board require therefore a further explanation.

Answer : The same Revenue cannot be collected upon 720-3 annas as upon 923-12 annas at 200 Rupees, without increasing the Tolah, the 200 Tolahs deducted by the Zemindars paying no revenue at all, which of course would leave so much for the Riotts and Talookdars to pay, to make up any sum demanded by the Farmer.

Q. 5. Is the property of the Zemindars distinct from that of the Talookdars ?

Answer : The Talookdars hold their lands from the Zemindars.

Q. 6. You mean it, in the nature of a Copy-hold held under a Lord of the Manor ?

Answer : I mean it, that the Talookdars hold their lands in that manner from the Zemindar.

Q. 7. Is the 203 Tolahs 9-3 which the Zemindars deduct from the former Jumma, a deduction from their separate rents or a deduction from the whole Zemindary ?

Answer : A deduction from the whole Zemindary.

Q. 8. Whence then this deduction could fall heavier upon the Talookdars than the Zemindars.

Answer : Because the 200 Rupees was a deduction in favour of the Zemindars every Tollah is the Jumma of 4 Dhones, makes 800 Dhones of land, which were deducted from the original Jumma and which land of course pays no Revenue.

Mr. Barwell's Question 1. : Most of the Talookdary tenures subject them to an increase, in proportion to the improvements that may be made in them; no Zemindary itself is held by this tenure and the Old Jumma of 923 Rupees pays now a Revenue of 1,00,000 and odd Rupees. Do you believe a Begah of improved land, held by the Talookdary Tenure under the Zemindary Tenure, pays to Government more in proportion than a Begah of Zemindary land ?

Answer : I do not comprehend this question; as the present Jumma is only 720 Rupees whereas 923 Rupees is invested in the foregoing question.

Q. 2. The question goes no further than to obtain a simple information for the Board, whether a Begah of the Talookdar's lands pays more in proportion than a Begah of Zemindar's land ?

Answer : In answer to this question I have only to say that the amount Collection is levied on a Jumma of 720 Rupees, of course the 203 Rupees Jumma or Tolah which is deducted from the 923 Rupees Jumma, pay no Revenue.

Q. 3. Do the Zemindars hold no land that pay a Revenue ?

Answer : This is a question I cannot positively answer neither do I rightly understand it, as the whole Revenue is supposed to be paid by the Zemindars.

Q. 4. You have informed the Board that the deduction from the Jumma of 200 and odd Tolahs was made from the Zemindar's lands and that their Revenue is in proportion decreased, that the same sum is however collected from the Pergunnah as was collected in the preceding year, by increasing the value of the Tolah—as the Talookdars only pay this Revenue, or is there any lands of the Zemindars which pay a proportion ?

Answer : I must beg leave to repeat that I have already acquainted your Board that the Talookdars pay the whole amount of Revenue on a Jumma of 720 Rupees, which of course exempts the Zemindars from paying any Revenue on the 203 Rupees which was deducted.

Q. 5. When were the deductions made by the Zemindars ?

Answer : In 1178/1771.⁴⁰

Barwell's pinpoint questioning destroyed the credibility of the case forwarded by Wordsworth. It was clearly evident that he was eschewing the cause of the Zemindars who did not pay any Revenue to the Government which was left to be paid by the Farmer and the Talookdars. The prestige of Wordsworth was further eroded, when the whispering shadows alleging that Wordsworth was bargaining with the disputing parties for the settlement of the Farm and accepting certain sums of money from both the parties, came to the forefront.

Wordsworth was foolish enough to accept a bribe of Rs. 5000 from the Vakeel of Baisnabcharan Nandy but then getting a better offer from the Zemindars of Amberabad decided to dump the case of Baisnabcharan. He sent in his report fully favouring the Zemindars. When this became known the other side let loose the information that Wordsworth had taken a bribe from them. So in fear of recrimination from his superiors he confessed the incident to Sumner after keeping quiet for full three months. He wrote on 18 August 1775, 'I am under the necessity of requesting that you will inform the Hon'ble Board that I received on the 14th June, as will further appear hereafter by my proceedings, a 'Teep' from Govind Ram Poddar*, Vakeel to Cantoo Baboo specifying 5000 A(arcot) Rupees

⁴⁰Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 3 November 1775, p. 5561-5565.

* Wrongly written. It should be Ramgovinda Rudra.

to soften matters between him (Cantoo Baboo) and the Zemindars and complainants of Ambarabad'.⁴¹ Sumner however kept himself carefully away and did not wish to get himself involved in the sordid matter. After waiting for another two and a half months Wordsworth gathered enough courage to lay the whole affair before the Board. In any case the reason of his partisan role had been by now public knowledge. He wrote at the end of his long report on Amberabad on 3 November 1775, 'I must now beg leave to lay before you a Teep for 5000 Rupees presented to me by Ram Rooder Cantoo's Vakeel, and to inform you that when he delivered it to me he promised me a further sum, in case I would be silent. To conclude my observations upon this Pergunnah, I must repeat my information that the Zemindars offered me Sicca Rupees 24000 per annum* to settle the Pergunnah upon them at the Bundabust fixed and paid by Cantoo; but as I deem the acceptance of every offer of this nature destructive to the Country, as well as dishonourable to myself, I have ever declined them.' Wordsworth failed to mention that he had accepted the money given to him by Ramgovinda Rudra on 14 June 1775 and had been silent over the matter for four and a half months. Moreover the reason for his accepting the money differs basically from what he had informed Sumner. There he wrote it was given to soften matters between Kantababu and the Zemindars. Here it was to keep silent. This strange lapse of memory did not establish him as an honest servant of the Company. Wordsworth concludes his report thus, 'I must further observe, that the Pergunnah will with ease to the Riott, yield a Revenue of 60000 Sicca Rupees per annum, supposing it to revert to the Zemindars at the expiration of the present lease, but not in case it should again be put up to sale, a mode of letting the lands attended with every bad consequence, tending to exclude the Zemindars and to satiate the minds of avaricious Banians and a set of desperate people who knowing they have nothing to lose, do not hesitate to close with even disadvantageous proposals and to conclude the scene tear the very bowels of the country to pieces.'⁴²

Now letters regarding the bribe given to Wordsworth were made available to the Board. The letter of Baisnabcharan Nandy in the hand writing of Ramgovinda Rudra dated 6th day of Assar in the year 1182 was translated to read as follows : 'I have agreed to give Mr. William

⁴¹Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 18 August 1775, p. 3753-3754.

* Equivalent to 30000 Arcot Rupees.

⁴²Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 3 November 1775, p. 5547-5549.

Wordsworth the sum of five thousand Rupees as a Nuzzerana, upon condition that he shall by a proper examination and enquiry refute the officers of Assur Wassil Budder-ul-Deen Zemindar, in every article of their complaints, agreeable to the representation of Abadullah, Zemindar.

I engage to pay the said sum in Calcutta without evasion upon Mr. Wordsworth's demanding it Arcot Rupces 5000.⁴³ Another letter was translated, in which Joynarayan Ghoshal promises to pay Wordsworth Arcot Rupees 2001 for restoration of his full rights as Zemindar in the the Pergunnah of Beluah, thus establishing a rather nefarious habit indulged in by Wordsworth.⁴⁴ Now Ramgobinda Rudra pressed home his advantage. In a petition to the Governor General in Council, he submitted on the 23 January 1776, 'I have been honoured with your letter mentioning that I had given a Teep for five thousand Rupees in order to accomodate my affairs in the Purgunnah of Umberabad, that Mr. Wordsworth has delivered in this Teep to the Council and that they intend transmitting it to England. I beg in answer to give you the following real state of this affairs.

'From the time that I first waited upon Mr. Wordsworth, he always spoke to me in a harsh and abusive manner, I never once received a kind or encouraging expression from him. Being helpless I attended on him at the desire of my constituent though with continued fear and trembling. When the Zemindar Assur Wassul Budder-ud-deen and their officers were before him, he always gave them chairs and even sometimes seated the officers when they came by themselves, while he obliged me to stand and spoke to me in an angry manner, by which means I suffered the highest disgrace. He always spoke of the different Zemindars, who are disputing about the Zemindary separately and heard them separately.

'One day having without reason grown angry with me about some of my constituents Jumma Kareecha and other accounts for the years 1179 and 1180, he put 10 peons over me and after speaking to me with great harshness offered to beat me. He did not however do it, but placed me out in the sun and then applied to me through his Dewan for a Teep of Ten thousand Rupees and he at last after great deal of altercation had passed, wanted to make me give him one for five thousand, I objected to it on account of my not having the concurrence of my constituent; but this

⁴³Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 4 December 1775, p. 5936-5937.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 5937-5938.

excuse was not admitted to be good, seeing that my disgrace impending, I had no recourse left and compelled I granted the Teep. The contents of the Teep itself will show how far I must have acted voluntarily. I immediately sent information of the circumstances to my constituent, who was very angry with me in consequence and charged me with folly and indiscretion. He delivered in a representation of the affair forthwith to the Council, but they have deferred examining into it, although now that Mr. Wordsworth has laid the Teep before them, they are determined to send that to England. If the Council does not think it proper to examine into this affair in presence of both parties, I am hopeful that in Justice they will also transmit to England, the representation delivered in on the subject by my constituent at the time it happened and this from me, that the Gentlemen in England may be able to judge from both the sides of the Question.'

Ramgobinda followed his first petition with a second one where he refuted the allegations made by Wordsworth. He also clarified the discrepancy in collection which Wordsworth interpreted in a different way.

'The Purgunnah of Umberabad (Amberabad) in the Sarkar of Sonnergram was let in farm to my constituent in the year 1179 upon a five years settlement. The first year he kept it in his own hands and (in the) ensuing year under-farmed it to Meer Hussain Ally. In the month of Cautick 1181 a Assur Wassel Budder-ud-deen, part Zemindar of the Purgunnah dispossessed Hussain Ally and obstructing the collections caused a considerable Ballance to be incurred. The Committee becoming very urgent for the payment of the above Ballance, my constituent relet the farm to Bissen Chand (Tewarry) who in consequence sent officers into the country, and by borrowing money from merchants paid up the Revenue to the end of the year. Afterwards he went to the Purgunnah himself and collected part of the Ballance due from it, on account of the preceding year, but in the meantime Assur Wassel Budder-ud-deen produced two Hircarrahs as coming from the Council together with a Perwannah in the Bengal language under three seals and English signatures which they immediately published throughout the Purgunnah and then proceeded to obstruct the collections and attached the money which had been collected by Bissen Chand.

'Abadullah one of the Zemindars and the Talookdars gave in a representation to the Council on the above affair, but they set aside examining

into this and deputed Mr. Wordsworth at the complaint of the Zemindars, who had been the occasion of the disturbances, to scrutinise into my constituent's accounts. My constituents appointed me to accompany Mr. Wordsworth giving me directions in writing to the officers employed by Bissen Chand, to show him the above Perwannah immediately upon his arrival in the Purgunnah. We in consequence showed the Perwannah to him, as soon as he arrived and he therefore said that it was forged; but that he would not interfere in the matter and desired me to transmit it to my constituent which I did and my constituent laid it before the Council. But the matter has not yet been enquired into. Mr. Wordsworth kept the two Hircarrahs along with him.' Then Ramgovinda Rudra repeated word by word the complaint he made against Wordsworth relating the circumstances under which the Teep was forced from him. Monson proposed that the petitions be sent to Wordsworth for his comments. Clavering, Francis and Hastings approved the suggestion.⁴⁵

Wordsworth wrote to the Supreme Council for permission to attend the meeting to reply to the charges brought by 'Ram Rooder, Vakeel to Cantoo'.⁴⁶ Accordingly Wordsworth attended the Board on 2 February 1776 and delivered his answer as follows: 'I am now to make my reply to the base complaint preferred against me by Ram Rooder, Cantoo Baboo's Vakil.

'If I rightly comprehend his accusation it is that I called upon him for his constituents Jumma Kurreetch and other accounts and that necessarily he gave me a Teep. This Teep, Gentlemen, must have been given to me to quiet my callings or in consequence of my having informed him that if he would give me a sum of money or a promissary note that I would cease my enquiries. This supposition of mine he has not dared to insert but commences his story like a true Bengallee by saying, "One day having without reason, that I threatened to beat him but did not etc., etc."—an empty complaint indeed and as ill conducted. Notwithstanding he has learnt by some means to address your Hon'ble Board with "I have been honoured with your letter etc. etc", rather the diction of an Englishman than that of an Indostan.'

After this primary insinuation against Hastings and his men, Wordsworth proceeded to deny all the charges. He denied that he had ever been

⁴⁵I.O.R. Bengal Revenue Consultation. Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 23 January 1776, p. 5-13.

⁴⁶Ibid., of 30 January 1776, p. 240.

harsh or put him out in the sun or demanded any money whatever the amount from him. He had rather, according to the prevalent practice, been lenient in not putting a peon on the Vakeel though his appointment authorised him to do so and which he regrets not having done as 'it is impossible (otherwise) to deal with so litigious a Race without threat, nay even punishment.'

But Wordsworth's angry vituperations were lost by the fact that he had taken the money, which he had to ultimately confess. 'Sometime after my arrival at Amberabad, Ram Rooder waited upon me in the most cringing manner telling me I was his lord and master and praying for my future wealth. I had some conversation with him, the particulars I do not recollect, however he went away satisfied with the reception I had given him. Some days later he acquainted me that Cantoo had directed him to pay me 5000 Rupees, 'to favour his business.' After many entreaties I accepted the Teep laid before your Board but at the time I received it I had no intention of ever demanding the payment or of ever laying it before the Board but in case of necessity. This necessity soon became conspicuous, but wishing on account of Cantoo not to expose the transaction (for which I now blame myself), I did not till the 3rd August acquaint your Secretary of my having received it altho' it stood minuted in my proceedings dated the 14th June.'

Wordsworth continued in his grand style to plead his innocence. He pledged his honour, staked his loyalty and referred to his pledge to the Company, declaring his integrity as unassailable. To vindicate his conduct he attached as the last resort a certificate of his Sircar Kaliprasad Ghosh, who pleading that his master was innocent merely confirmed that the Teep had been accepted by his master personally. The certificate of the Sircar trying to assert the innocence of Wordsworth said that the Zemindars of Amberabad offered him a Nazrana of Rs. 60000 which again did not adhere to Wordsworth's own confession that they offered him Rs. 24000 per annum.

The Board was not convinced of his innocence. His pompous lying in answer to the question of General Clavering destroyed his credibility fully. Clavering asked: 'Whether offers were made to you to give you any sum and what sum on the part of Cauntoo Baboo in Calcutta before your departure to Amberabad?'

Wordsworth replied: 'This is a question that I could wished to have avoid answering, but as I am called upon, I answer in the Affirmative, that there were, but to which of my people I really cannot say as several of them are absent from Calcutta, I therefore beg leave to wait their arrival at which time I will make a full reply to this question'.

Though he could not remember to whom Kantababu had offered money and what was the sum, he tried to bluff his way out by taking advantage of the Majority's dislike to Kantababu. The final ruse of Wordsworth also fell through and completely exposed his ridiculous attempts to cover the truth. As the ultimate attempt to prove his innocence, Wordsworth requested leave of the Board to ask 4 or 5 persons who belonged to Amberabad, whether he ever placed Ram Roodra out in the sun or tortured him in any manner. The persons named were Sarruffuddin, Amamudeen, Mohomed Mussy and Jabbar Mohamed, all Talookdars of Amberabad.

On being questioned Sarruffuddin and Mahomed Mussy replied that they never heard of such an event. Amamuddin (Imamuddin?) replied that at the time of the event he was in Calcutta. Sarruffuddin and Mahomed Mussy being questioned again replied that they were also in Calcutta at the time of the event.

After Wordsworth had withdrawn himself from the Council, the Governor General asked for the exact translation of the passage to Mr. Chalmers, where Wordsworth insinuated as having found an Englishman's hand. Chalmers translated, 'your gracious letter mentioning that etc...having nobly arrived, honoured and dignified me.'⁴⁷

Thus failed the case of Wordsworth rather miserably and the Majority at the height of their power at the time, let such a juicy accusation against Kantababu trickle through their fingers.

Not much is heard about this farm. On 28 October 1776 it is recorded that Amberabad, 'the Farm of Bishna Charan Nundee' has paid its rent fully amounting to Rs. 42000.'⁴⁸

⁴⁷IOR. Bengal Revenue Consultations. Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 2 February 1776, p. 279-293.

⁴⁸Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 28 October 1776, p. 536.

The next year another dispute arose between Abdullah the Zemindar and the Farmer. Abdullah's Arzee was read in the Calcutta Committee of Revenue. 'The Pergunnah of Amberabad my Zemindaree was rented to Busnoo Churn Nundee for five years and that the Mahal by the oppression of the Farmer has been much injured. The Amla of the Farmer and Cutkinnadar still continue to collect and embezzle the collections of the present year and except a Susawill (Sezwal) is sent, the Mahal will not be cultivated, nor will the five collections be realised. I therefore request, you will be pleased to appoint one for the above purposes and to recover from them whatever it may appear they have collected as embezzlement of the present year's rent.' The Duan was asked to send a *Sezwal* without delay. The Arzee of 'Beeshno Churan Nundee' was also read on the day. He urged that, 'I have Farmed the Pergunnahs Amberabad and Satsikka since the commencement of the last Bundabust and by borrowing money I have constantly paid the Rents yearly. As the lease is now expired and a Susawill is to be deputed, having considerable arrears due from the Zemindars and Taluckdars, I request you will enquire into them and enforce payment, that I may be released from debt.'

It was agreed that this petition be referred to the Superintendent of the Adawlat requesting, he will redress the grievances the petitioner complains of.⁴⁹

The affair of Amberabad ended certainly with advantage to the Farmer. The disputing Zemindars however did not pay fully, so in the account of moneys due from others, Baisnabcharan showed the very large amount of outstanding from Amberabad in 1779.

'Pargana Amberabad

1. Khas collection due from Zemindars and Talookdars	Rs. 32,013-6-12-0
2. Division due from Meer Dost Ally, Security Meer Hussain Ally	Rs. 23,950-6-10-0
3. Do due from Bissen Chund Tewary Security Kishenchund Tewary	Rs. 35,931-3-0-0
	Rs. 91,895-0-2-0
lent to Meer Hussain Ally—Cash	Rs. 8,756-0-0-0
Total due from Amberabad	Rs. 1,00,651-0-2-0

⁴⁹Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 2 June 1777, p. 1521 & 1524.

It is not known whether this outstanding lakh of Rupees could ever be recovered.⁵⁰

The Amberabad dispute brings to knowledge the details of the prevalent system of calculations of rental. The system has been no where else in this manner explained. From that point alone the study of the Amberabad dispute is beneficial to history.

Saatsikka

Pargana Saatsikka in Midnapore district had an annual Jumma of little over Rs. 41,000. It was referred to for the first time when it was found that there was an arrear of rent from Kantababu amounting to Rs. 15000 only. The President of the Calcutta Committee was requested to take such measures as to collect the balance dues from the Foujdar of Hooghly and Kantababu as expeditiously as possible. None of these amounts however were as large as the balance of Raja Krisnachandra of Nadia which amounted to Rs. 2,46,369, and therefore were easy to collect.⁵¹

By June 1775 the Zemindar of the Pargana was falling in the line to complain against the oppressions of Kantababu. The petition, though full of local colour was basically of the same pattern as before. The petition of the Zemindar of Saatsikka read, 'About 10 years ago Souberam, inhabitant of Summutgur was the Gomastah of Comulpore. He was appointed to my household and has embezzled great sums out of Tuncaws, Comar and sales of gardens; I therefore dismissed him in Maug and required of him the Jumma-Currutch. He answered that it was not ready but that he would deliver it in after a few days. By the means of this excuse, he continued to be in the Purgunnah sometime and afterwards absconded to Calcutta, carrying away with him, my mother's Seal, which was in his charge in order to be set in a ring. He took 300 Rupees of Cantoo Baboo and gave a receipt in my name. Out of this he (Sobharam) sent 125 Rupees for the expenses of his own house to his brother Gocul Moody together with a letter which I can produce. The rest of the money he expended himself. I have heard that he has converted the seal to bad purposes, by dispersing Arzees, and raising disturbances. I request, you will order the Dewan of the Zilla of Calcutta to summon him and oblige

⁵⁰Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 30 July 1779, p. 149-159.

⁵¹Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 3 October 1774, p. 105-106.

him to restore my mother's seal and what it appears that he has embezzled by the Jumma-Currutch; also to come and explain all accounts.'⁵²

In the second letter the Zemindar made direct accusations against Kantababu. 'The farm of this Purgunnah was formerly held by Berjeh Kishvor, the Burdwan Zemindar's Dewan. Birkut Oolla, my servant by his collusion with Cantoo Baboo without apprising me and oppressively rented it from Berieh Kishvor and transferred it to Cantoo Baboo. He himself became Cutkunnadar and used the seal of Mahomed Azher (Muhammad Asghar), who is not possessed of sound senses, but has intervals of madness, to constitute him the Security. He carried with him a Sezwal of Cantoo's into the Moffusil and embezzled what he chose. At the end of the year he gave a Bond to Cantoo Baboo under the seal of Mahomed Azher for Rs. 24,000 which was the balance. He has combined with Cantoo Baboo in a design of dispossessing Mahomed Azher of the Zemindary.

'Cantoo Baboo has already included in his own Zemindary the village Dunwa of which the Jumma is Rs. 1200 which he has taken for Rs. 351. He has attached and taken the Comar, nancar etc., the fund from whence, I was furnished with subsistence. By this means I and my dependents are in the greatest distress. This induced me to come to a resolution of going to Calcutta myself in order to represent my situation, but Cantoo Baboo hearing of it from an Hircarrah stopt me. Being prevented from coming myself I now transmit an account of Cantoo Baboo's etc. embezzlement and being the close of the year Birkut Oolla, who has been appointed Sezwal has collected with great oppression and desolated the Country. I therefore request to be summoned that I may represent all the particulars and prove the embezzlement.'⁵³

Now the Ryotts complained, in the first petition against Barkat Oolla and in the other against Kantababu. The petitions only helped to create more confusion all around. Even the facts presented were contradictory.

'1st. Shaik Birkut Oolla was appointed Dewan of the Zemindar between the beginning of 1178 and the end of 1180. He collected

⁵²Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 5 June 1775 LRN-322, p. 576-582.

⁵³Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 5 June 1775 LRN 324, p. 576-582.

a Mahtoot of 3000 Rupees, of which we complained last year to Cantoo Baboo; he was in consequence dismissed, and with respect to the money, Cantoo Baboo said, "I will send him into the Muffusil and he shall return what may be proved upon him by examination made in the presence of both the parties before the Shaikdar". After this promise he gave us betel and dismissed us. He never did send him nor have we ever received back the Mahtoot.

'2nd. In the month of Chait 1181 Cantoo Baboo appointed Birkut Oolla Tahseeldar and sent him into the Purgunnah. Immediately upon his arrival he applied for the Dewanny. The Zemindar answered, "I know nothing, my mother manages and she will do what she thinks best." He then made application to the mother; she answered, "He has to answer (for) many embezzlements and delays paying the money. He has before by bribing held this office and all (for) his own pleasure alineated several lands under the name of Khurant, which has always been used to pay Revenue, and has been plundering my Zemindary. I will never consent to his being Dewan." She sent for us and we attended, which so enraged Birkut Oolla that he confined several of us in the Cutcherry of Mahomed-Aumeenpore, attached her Dowry and committed several acts of oppression as she herself represents in her Arzee.

'3rd. Some of the Ryotts came to Cantoo Baboo to complain and he released those who were confined in the Cutcherry of Mahomed Aumeenpore, he also recalled Birkut Oolla, gave us betel and dismissed us with a promise, never to send Birkut Oolla on any account again. He also received letters from the Zemindar and Zemindars' mother, complaining of the rapaciousness and oppression of Birkut Oolla, and desiring, he might not be retained, a servant of the Purgunnah. Yet upon receiving a bribe from Birkut Oolla, he immediately gave him an appointment and kept guard over the Rannee. He has rendered the Zemindar, who is wholly unacquainted with business and is at times mad, entirely dependent upon himself and supports Birkut Oolla.

'4th. Birkut Oolla after his arrival in the Muffusil did not procure back from the Sheikdar and Duan, what they had taken under the names of Parbanny and Salammy. He obliged Perkut (Parikshit) and Ram Deo to resume two Hoodas, which they had taken in Bussunt Ram's time and afterwards given up because they had held them before. We have received back the Salammy etc., excess of Collection from Perkut and Ram Deo

and given a farekutty. But 7 or 8 Ryotts who are of Birkut Oolla's party have not received their share, although it has been paid by Hoodadars and deposited in the hands of Cantoo Baboo, so that they have given no farekutty. The Hoodadars have money due to them from several Assamies. They are not attended to and cannot recover the money, which has perplexed and distressed us these last three months'. The last petition which is also from the Ryotts of Saatsikka creates further confusion. The time and place of incidents as well as the incidents themselves are sometimes contradictory. The petition goes:—

'The Farm of this Pergunnah has stood in the name of Bishnoo Churn Nandy, Nephew of Cantoo Baboo, since the year 1178 (1771). In 1180 Cantoo Babu gave 4 years Cutkunna of it to Bussunt Ram Dewan. In the begining of 1181 we complained against Birkut Oolla, Cantoo told us, he would remove Bussunt Ram and directed us to prefer a joint complaint against Bussunt Ram and Birkut Oolla. We therefore complained heavily to Cantoo against both. He in consequence dismissed them and appointed a Shaikdar and a Naib Zemindar; the latter Ram-gobinda Mudgemoider, he encouraged us and assured us that Birkut Oolla should never go to Saatsikka, we went away happy and paid our Revenue punctually. But in the month of Chait, Cantoo Baboo sent Birkut Oolla with the appointment of a Sezwal, upon which the Rannee sent for us and we attended her. Birkut Oolla arrived and went with his servants to the Zemindar's House and you have been informed of his oppressions by the Zemindar's mother. He has put chains on some of us, who attend her, and confined us in the Cutcherry of Mahomedpore. Some went to Cantoo Baboo to complain. He released those who had been confined and encouraged us by promising never more to send Birkut Oolla. He afterwards appointed Birkut Oolla Naib Zemindar and sent a Sheikdar who was entirely under his command. We have suffered much oppression, Pirkut (Parikshit) Mundil is at hand, Gunnes (Ganesh) and Chutan (Chaitan) upon whom Pirkut Mundil had a claim being supported by Birkut Oolla, obtained a peon from Cantoo and ill treated Pirkut Mundil's father, who is old and infirm. We can place no dependence in Cantoo's encouragement, we request that the Farm may be taken out of his hands as we are ready to prove the oppressions of Birkut Oolla.'⁵⁴

⁵⁴Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 5 June 1775 LRN 325 & 326, p. 576-582.

The Calcutta Committee must have been as confused and bewildered by the complaints and ordered that all parties be summoned.

Strangely very little is recorded about this matter. The Duan of the Committee in a short note informed that the 'Purgunnah Sattsikka is farmed by Cantoo Baboo in the name of Bushnoo Churn and the Zemindar took the Cutkenna of it from Cantoo. But the Cutkennadar has never been summoned on any business relating to the Farm, but he might be summoned should Cantoo complain against him.'⁵⁵

The dispute practically rests there. A year later on 28 October 1776 the following remarks appear. 'Pergunna Saatsikka:

Jumma of 1176	—	Rs. 59,029-13-2
Decrease of 1179	—	„ 13,231- 9-2 — Balance Rs. 45,798-4-0

Cantoo Baboo has the management of this Pergunna. The above Jumma may be collected without difficulty. If made Khas and an Addadar appointed I conceive something more can be drawn from it. The expenses of the Addadar be deducted from the Russom of the Mahlzamin.'⁵⁶

The Committee most probably appointed a Sezwal for collection, after the lease period was over, as Baisnabcharan complains of his debts to the Zemindars and Talookdars and requests to be reimbursed on 2 June 1777. His request was passed on to the Superintendent of the Adawlat for dispsal.⁵⁷

Baisnabcharan presenting his final accounts showed the following arrears:

Pergunna Saatsikka. Kutkindar Burkut Ullah Chowdhury, Security Mohamed Askar Cawn Zemindar of the Pergunna Division of Khas collection arrears of Kutkenadars and Ryotts---	Rs. 20,537- 7-18
	Rs. 4,523-12- 6
	<hr/> Rs. 25,061- 4- 4 ⁵⁸

The affairs of this Pargana are one of the most incomplete in record. Looking through the available history it can be concluded that as in the other cases, the complaints against Kantababu made little impact on

⁵⁵Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 25 October 1775, p. 1667.

⁵⁶Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 28 October 1776, p. 543.

⁵⁷Ibid., of 2 June 1777, p. 1524.

⁵⁸Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 30 July 1779, p. 149-159.

him. He continued Farming till the end of his term when he settled accounts and demanded the arrears. The truth of the accusations cannot be judged without more details.

Cotubpore etc., or the 42 Parganas of Midnapore and Jellasore.

From one district or Pargana in Midnapore to 42 Parganas is a big jump indeed. Confusion was created by calling the farm as 'Cotubpore and other Parganas'. Now 'the other Parganas' often vanished from record, calling it the Farm of Cotubpore Pargana only. Later students, not careful enough to distinguish the mistake often considered the farm of Cotubpore to be separate from the 42 Parganas and then wondered about the fate of the latter. To resolve the problem it may be noted that the 42 Parganas consisted of Cotubpore and other Parganas which were surrendered by Kantababu after only a year of farming. This was the only Farm that the Banian of Hastings received during the tenure of his office and relinquished after being threatened by his master with dismissal. Thus the Farm of Cotubpore and other Parganas remained with Kantababu from 1773 to 1774. In other words the farm was given up before the struggle for power in the Council reached its zenith. Even in this regard Kantababu was lucky indeed, as his decision to relinquish the farm of Cotubpore could not have been better timed. This decision also was criticised by the Majority which offered Hastings the opportunity of demonstrating that the opposition was merely anti-Hastings in its temper. They castigated him for allowing his Banian so many farms, though in fact, he had them even before the coming of Hastings and also opposed him when he forced his Banian to relinquish the Farm taken in 1773.

On the 11 January 1773 Kantababu took the Farm of Cotubpore and other Parganas for 5 years, corresponding to the 1 Magh 1179.⁵⁹ Before that happened, little was heard about these 42 Parganas in Midnapore and Jellasore. Stray references show that the Zemindars and Talookdars were asking to be exempted from the Poolbundi taxes, which were approved. A few days later they applied to pay their rents directly to the Khalsa Cutcherry, which was also approved.⁶⁰ Except that both the actions smelled of a Revenue expert lurking behind, there is nothing

⁵⁹I.O.R. Bengal Revenue Consultations. Range 49, Vol. 70. Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 22 April 1777, p. 11-30

⁶⁰Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 1 and 15 December 1772, p. 641 and 856.

to prove the presence of Kantababu there. Then almost without any warning Kantababu was introduced as the Security to the Zemindars on 26 January 1773.

Kantababu's petition as the Mahalzameen was recorded as a matter of course. The Superintendent of the Khalsa delivered the petition with the remark, 'Agreed it to be here entered that the Resolution of the Board be annexed to each article.' The petition was given. 'Translation of the Petition of Kishen Caunt, Security for the Pergunnas of the Chucklas of Midnapore and Jellasore.

'1st. Hallbungen was from old allowed in many Mehalls, for example, having in the year 1179 paid in the above mentioned Districts the collection from the year 1180 during the present term of your servant's being security, they are wholly without a balance. It is your petitioners wish that conforming yearly to this custom, he may continue as usual and make Hallungen in 1184 from the receipts of 1185.

'2nd. The Petitioner has given Security to the Government from the commencement of the year. He therefore wishes that whatever may have been collected for the present Mahtout* shall be explained by comparison with the Zemindars from which sum he will find credit in the Kistibundee of the year.

'3rd. That peons are not to go into the Muffusil on matters of complaint—a Vaqueel shall attend to answer on all subjects at the proper juncture—should any one's attendance be necessary the Vaqueel will cause him to appear

(Notes in the margin—A Tulhab Chitty shall be delivered to the Vaqueel on the part of the Zemindar as provided for by the article of the general Resolution).

'4th. Many Zemindars and Talookdars in the Moffusul are greatly indebted to the merchants. It is the petitioner's wish that the Merchants shall not be allowed by sending People into the Moffusul to confine the said Zemindars etc. and to raise disturbances. The matter shall be referred to the Board and settled as they direct after the Revenue is paid to the

* Imposition, Occasional impost—Firminger, Glossary.

Government according to the Bundibust. (Notes in the margin—No man shall be permitted to use force in the prosecution of his own demands but shall apply to the Collector or to the Council or to the Court of Dewanee Adawlat according to the nature of the claim and any man acting in contrary manner shall be punished in the violation of Peace).

‘5th. Should any of the Zemindars and Talookdars use violence they are to be punished by the Government.

‘6th. The Talookdars and Zemindars etc. are to pay the Revenue according to their Kists. If they evade them, the petitioner having the management of the affairs of the Moffusul will superintend the Mulguzzary.

(A true translation—signed John Bristow translator to the Khalsa).’

‘Translation of the Mhalzaminy (Security agreement) entered into by Kishen Kaunt Doss for some pergunnahs in Midnapore and Jellasore:

I Kishen Kaunt Doss now give the following Mhalzaminy under my hand :—Whereas the Talookdars, Zemindars and Chowdhurries of Pergunna Moynachowra etc. in Sircar Gowalparah and Sircar Magetteah in the Chuklas of Midnapore together with the Pergunnah Bercool etc. in the Sircar of Jellasore and Chuckla of Jellasore have entered into settlement with Government for their own lands for a term of five years that is from the beginning of Fassli year 1180 to the end of 1184 and have engaged to pay their Revenue at the Khalsa agreeable to a Kistibundee, which they have delivered in, under their hands, I hereby of my own Will and accord become Mhalzamin for them in conformity to the under-mentioned particulars. The said Zemindars etc. shall pay their Revenue regularly. Kist by Kist and year by year and in case of any of them failing to make their payments agreeable to Kistibundee, I shall take possession of the land and discharge the Balance.

List of the Pergunnahs etc.:—

A. In Midnapore.

1.	Pergunnah Koolee Sersur	— 1
2.	„ Malkudpoor	— 1
3.	„ Digkislyanpore	— 1

4.	Pergunnah Keddar	— 1
5.	„ Kurruckpoor	— 1
6.	Tuppa Bullarampoor	— 1
7.	Kellah Moynachowra	— 1
8.	Pergunnah Cotubpoor (Kutubpur)	— 1
9.	„ Gungapoor	— 1
10.	Tuppa Jumneats	— 1
11.	Pergunnah Ameereea	— 1
12.	„ Pertaban	— 1
13.	„ Bayamoota	— 1
14.	„ Futtaipoor	— 1
15.	„ Budgerpoor	— 1
16.	Kismut Cossijurah	— 1
17.	Pergunnah Ooterbahar	— 1
18.	„ Duttmootah	— 1
19.	Kismut Pergunnah Soobung, the Talooks of Nund Kishen Paul, Gowry Churn and Kishan- churn Paul, Maharam Bose and others, in all 115 people whose names are contained in a separate paper	— 1
20.	Sayer Naraynegur	— 1
		20

B. In Jellasore

1.	Huwaily Jellasore	— 1
2.	Tuppa Kusy Addy	— 1
3.	„ Gunganessar (Paya Bakey)	— 1
4.	Pergunnah Aurungabad	— 1
5.	Tuppa Gunganessar (Mokurrary)	— 1
6.	Pergunnah Rajegur	.. 1
7.	„ Dattun	— 1
8.	„ Turkachour	— 1
9.	Sayer Jait Tan	— 1
10.	Tannah Futcabad	— 1
11.	„ Nurrunga Chour	— 1
12.	„ Meerguddee	— 1
13.	Pergunnah Kol Chour	— 1
14.	„ Agra Chour	— 1

15.	Pergunnah Chuck Ismail	— 1
16.	„ Sheepur	— 1
17.	„ Beercool	— 1
18.	„ Balsail	— 1
19.	„ Cutnagar	— 1
20.	„ Mutkuttahbad	— 1
21.	„ Burraiechour	— 1
22.	„ Leipocheour	— 1

— — —
22—Total 42.

Dated the 11 January 1773 corresponding to the 1st day of Magh in the Fussuly year 1180 and Bengal year 1179. Signed—Kisson Kunt Doss.⁶¹

The Board allowed almost every clause as presented by the Security. The remarks written in the margin were thus :—

1st—The Hallbungen will be collected according to Custom.

2nd—Undoubtedly.

3rd—A Tullub Chitty shall be delivered to the Vakeel on the part of the Zemindar as provided for by the general regulations.

4th.—No man shall be permitted to use force in the prosecution of his own demand, but shall apply to the Collector or to the Court of Duanee Adowlet according to the nature of his claim and any man acting in contrary manner shall be punished for violation of the Peace.

5th.—Undoubtedly.

6th.—So long as the Zemindar is particular in his payment (altho for caution the people of the Malguzarry or Security may attend) the business of the Malguzarry shall be in the hands of the Zemindars. If the Zemindars fail in his Kists the Security shall send his people into the Moffusil and they shall take charge of the Kists from the Zemindars.

⁶¹Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 26 January 1773, p. 271-275. And
I.O.R. Bengal Revenue Consultations. Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 22 April 1777, p. 14-16.

'Agreed that a copy of the above be transmitted to the Resident at Midnapore with the following letter :—

To Mr. Edward Baber; Sir, Enclosed we transmit you copy of a Petition, we have received from Kishen Caunt with our resolutions in consequence annexed to each article to which we desire you will attend. Dated, Fort William, 26 January 1773.⁶²

So the whole matter was almost treated as a regular affair of appointing a Security in January 1773. Similarly the relinquishment of the Security was also considered to be a matter of routine. There was a simple petition from Kantababu offering relinquishment and the Board accepting it. The title of the Parganas as 'Cotubpore' gained ground from this time as Kantababu in his petition of relinquishment had written as such. The translation of the petition was read on 4 January 1774.

'Cotobpore etc., Mahallas of the Chucklas Midnapore and Jellasore for which your petitioner is security are distant from hence, the Revenue thereof is in consequence not received at the proper time and the demand of the Government must be discharged according to the Kists. A large sum has thus fallen in Balance to your Petitioner in the said Mahals. He therefore hopes to be released from the engagement as security and to be favoured with a Perwannah to the Collector there, to cause the Balances due from the Talookdars to your Petitioner to be paid him. (A true translation by John Barton, translater to Khalsa).'

As Kantababu was acting according to the wish of the Governor General the petition did not go beyond the essential. The resolution of the Board was also short and straight forward. 'Board's Resolution. Agreed that the security of Cotobpore*, be allowed to relinquish from the commencement of the present Orissa year 1181**, that his accounts be adjusted with the Zemindar and that he be credited for the amount he has paid to the Treasury on account of the present year's Revenue and debited for the sums he has collected in the Purgunnahs, and in the interim he be required to compleat (sic) the Kists to the end of Augun.

⁶²Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 26 January 1773, p. 271-275.

* As there was no mention of other Parganas, this was the starting point of the confusion.

** Bengal year 1180.

A copy of the petition along with the Board's Resolution was sent to the Collector of Midnapore on the same day with directions of taking charge of the Parganas for which Kantababu was the security with immediate effect. He was also asked to fix the payment of Kists on the Zemindars from the month of Pous. Baber was specially asked to revive in all papers the names of the original securities who were offered by the Zemindars, before Kantababu took over.⁶³ The last order is an indication that Kantababu became the Security without the Zemindars' consent and as such his position there was untenable. Apprehensive of trouble, Hastings adamantly demanded their relinquishment.

Kantababu definitely did not realise the wisdom of the action at that moment and was resentful. The Superintendent of the Khalsa informed the Board on 29 March that he in consequence of their directions of the 4 January required Kishencunt the late Security of Cotubpore etc., to complete the Kists to the end of the month of Aghran (Augun) but that he refused to comply therewith, alleging that there has already been paid to the Government a larger sum than the collections in the District amounts to, upto that time. The Board remarked that as a considerable amount of time has elapsed since the Collector of Midnapore was directed to transmit an account of collections made to the Khalsa, comprehended under the head Cotubpore etc., he be ordered to send it without delay. In the meantime the demand made on Kantababu was suspended pending the receipt of the account from Samuel Lewis the new Collector of Midnapore.⁶⁴

While Hastings wanted to close the chapter as quickly as possible Kantababu was doggedly determined not to incur any loss by this relinquishment. This was possibly the cause of difference between Hastings and his Banian. Hastings wrote in a private letter to Vansittart on 8 November 1773 'Dear George, Cantoo is desirious to furnish your account of Midnapore and other Districts in which he is concerned, immediately. He is desirious to pay immediately what is due from him to relinquish them all but his own Talooks. From these...he denies that anything is due. If any is, it is not through any fault of his, but from delays

⁶³Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 4 January 1774, p. 3891-3893.

⁶⁴Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 29 March 1774, p. 312-313.

in which he has no share, as the claims which he made on account of the two last and which I sent 4 months ago with my own opinion still remain undetermined. For God's sake get this business concluded, for I am resolved that he shall either resign these concerns and immediately or my service, that I may not be blamed for his omissions.'⁶⁵ Kantababu persisted in his own way and petitioned on 4 October 1774 that nothing was allowed to him in the shortness of the weight of the Rupee. Hastings perceived the trouble, while Kantababu did not. This shortsightedness not only cost him the displeasure of his master but also his lucrative manufactory in salt which he had to give up in 1774 and Hastings, the only person who could have saved him from this predicament was forced to take a strictly neutral stand.

Kantababu's petition of the 4 October stands out therefore as an act of folly. Moreover the accounts of James Lawrell which accompanies the petition shows Nursing Baboo as the Mahalzamin of Cotubpore.

'The translation of a Petition from Kishen Caunt. The Zemindars of Chucklas of Midnapore and Jellasore have delivered in at the Cutcherry of the Chucklas, the accounts of the receipts made during the time of my being their Security, that is from the beginning of the year 1180 until the month of Augun 1181 annually. The said accounts are received at the Khalsa and on taking a copy of them I perceive that nothing is allowed me for the shortness of the weight of the rupees, the Batta on Rupee-Sicca, the Zemindary charges and the Securities Reform etc. and that without comparing the Zemindars and my Gomastah's accounts together, it will be impossible to adjust the matter. I therefore hope that the officers of the Zemindary may be directed to come to the presence and bring their accounts, that the same may be compared with my Gomastah's equitably adjusted'.

Mysteriously Nursing, Kantababu's brother is shown as the Security in the accounts, though all along it was the elder brother who was the Mahalzamin. The problem is too complicated to be resolved at this later date. The beneficiary was of course Kantababu.

'Nursing Baboo, Mahalzamin of Cotobpore.

⁶⁵British Museum. Hastings Papers. Add. Mss. 29134, f. 114.

Dr.					Cr.
To Revenue for the Orixa year 1180	Rs. 2,44,758- 9-10		1179		
Deduct collection before the Mahalzamin had charge	Rs. 43,703-10- 6	Rs. 2,01,054-15- 4	By Cash paid to the Treasury	Rs. 1,94,033- 6-10	
To Kists of Aswin, Kautick, Augun, Orixa Year 1181	Rs. 49,742- 0- 0		1180		
Deduct by the Mhalzamin from Zemindars —Rs. 21-6-0			By do	do	20,000- 0- 0
Maintenance — , 8,584-0-0	8,605- 6- 0	Rs. 41,136-10- 0	By Ballance	do	41,038-15-14
To an overplus received by Nurshing from some Zemindars etc. etc.		Rs. 5,775-14- 8 *			
To an overplus due to the Zemindars in consequence of Tacaby etc. of 1179 being transferred to their debit with Govt. etc. etc.		Rs. 7,104-14-12			
		Rs. 2,55,072- 6- 4			Rs. 2,55,072- 6- 4

5th July 1774
Fort William. Signed—James Lawrell.

* figures corrected

The above accounts show that over Rs. 41000 which was due from Kantababu or Nursing as the case may be on account of Cotubpore⁶⁶ in July 1774 was disputed. As there is no trace of this balance when the Cotubpore debate took place, it can be presumed that Hastings prevailed upon his Banian to make the payment as soon as the Majority started scrutinising his investments.

The Cotubpore affair did not come up till 1777, which made General Clavering to comment that it was kept hidden from his notice. The arguments that followed were extremely colourful and demands repetition.

‘Clavering : It appears that out of 57 Pergunnahs in the Province of Midnapore and Jellasore that Canto Babu was Security for 42 and actual collector of many of them. Amongst the Farms which he has relinquished and of which the Court of Directors have yet had no account as they were concealed from us at the time, when we transmitted the accounts of the other Farms.

Hastings : It is not necessary that I also should expend hours in continuing a Debate which has no object. All that is said in the proceedings’ minutes respecting Cantoo Baboo is totally inapplicable to the present subject. As a proof however that the accounts transmitted by the Council of Burdwan are literally conformable to the orders which were given them. I desire these Orders may be subjoined.

Clavering : I move that the Accountant General be directed to makē out an Account of all the Farms held by Cantoo Baboo in Midnapore and Jellasore as likewise that of the 7 annas Division of Tamluk for all of which he was the Security and of many of them, the actual Receiver of the Rents, in the same manner as he is directed to make out the other accounts of the Farms held by him conformably to the orders of the Court of Directors’.

Philip Francis and the Governor General agreed to the motion. Clavering then wanted that Kantababu’s petition to the Board of 26 January 1773 and the Cabooliat granted to him in consequence, in respect of Midnapore and Jellasore be also entered in the day’s

⁶⁶Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 4 October 1774, p. 6295-6297.

proceedings. During the debate Clavering lost control of himself and could not help twisting an earlier statement of Hastings to his own advantage, 'Mr. Hastings had often asserted that his Banian had taken his farms without his knowledge. He will not assurdly attempt to maintain that he was unacquainted with the engagements which his Banian made with the Board on the 26th January 1773 nor will he venture to deny that he did not know that Cantoo was the Security for the several Pergunnahs of Midnapore when he gave orders on the 17th March 1773, that the Petitions from the Zemindars alleging that their names had been used in those engagements against their consent and that they should not be entered into the proceedings. I mention this on the authority of Baber's letters inserted on the Proceedings of the 17th March 1773. I desire that these petitions may now be produced and not lie only for inspection but to be entered on the proceedings in the same manner that other petitions are. By the clue, which these and other transactions at Midnapore affords, the Court of Directors will judge of the motion for the opposition shown to Bogerut Sing's appointment to be Naib of the place, for his removal from it...They will see that my bringing forth Cantoo Baboo's name on this occasion was not so foreign to the subject as the Governor General was willing to make the Court of Directors believe.'⁶⁷

The Cotubpore affair was certainly the weakest to defend. This was not a farm that Kantababu had acquired before the coming of Hastings. This was given in his full knowledge on the face of the opposition of some of the Zemindars. Moreover the usual practice was transgressed and the Security was allowed to collect directly from some of the Mahals. When Kantababu quitted from Cotubpore and the other Parganas Rs. 2,66,934-11-3-0⁶⁸ was deducted from his total collection. He retained the farm barely for a year. Hastings knew all this, so his counter attack was not to defend the actions in regard to Midnapore and Jellasore, but to challenge the opposition to prove Kantababu's connection with Bisnupore and Patchet. As soon as Midnapore was mentioned, Bisnupore was brought up till the debators and the debate got utterly confused. If one is not careful even now, it is possible to mix up Midnapore and Jellasore with Bisnupore and Patchet.

⁶⁷I.O.R. Bengal Revenue Consultations, Range 49 Vol. 70 Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 22 April 1777, p. 11-30.

⁶⁸Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 17 March 1775, Chart, p. 1031.

Bisnupur and Patchet.

The affairs of the farm has been dealt with in Chapter IV (As Revenue Farmer) of the first volume. The two Provinces were separated from Beerbhoom and John Sumner the Collector was informed that henceforth Bisnupore would be managed by Mathew Dawson and Patchet by Suetonius Grant Heatly who will receive order directly from the Board.⁶⁹ A few months later Gungagovind Singh, Aumeen, deputed to Beerbhoom established the Jumma of the two separated Provinces.⁷⁰ Mr. Vansittart in his minutes of 6 and 10 May 1774 clarified the matter with a summary of accounts showing that Gorachand Nandy, Krisnana-nda Sircar and Kandarpa Das were the Security and Farmers,⁷¹ thus refuting the earlier notion that Kantababu was the farmer of Bissenpur and Patchet.⁷² Even on June 1774, the Board took a rational approach in allowing the personal Talook of Lokenath Nundy (which was later conjoined with Cantonagar) in Patchet to be separated from the rent of the Hoodda.⁷³

The Majority disbelieved almost every statement that was made by the Governor General. They insisted on looking into every bit of paper that was available. Their knowledge regarding the Indian Revenue system was not perfect. Prejudice swayed their judgement. They would not believe that Gorachand, the rather fickle youngest brother of Kantababu was the victim of circumstances, guided by the extremely tricky Krishnananda Sircar who along with Kandarpa Das was the real Farmer of Bissenpur and Patchet. Gorachand as soon as he was alerted by his brother, deserted the scene of action, strongly denying his association. He is found to be joining the Amin Daftar in Rajmahal. From Birbhum to Rajmahal was a long leap indeed. Kantababu also proved that Lokenath's name was used without his consent or knowledge. S. G. Heatly confirmed the assertions of Kantababu, writing on 6 May 1774, 'In answer to your Secretary's letter of the 22nd ultimo, I beg leave to acquaint the Hon'ble Board that Cantoo Baboo' was not ostensibly either Farmer or Security of Patchet during the time I had the charge of that District...I only saw the Amilnama in which Gorachand Nundee

⁶⁹Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 19 January 1773, p. 121-123.

⁷⁰Ibid., of 23 July 1773, p. 309-310, 324.

⁷¹Ibid., of 6 & 10 May 1774, p. 111-118, 193.

⁷²Ibid., of 20 August 1772, p. 492-493.

⁷³Ibid., of 21 June 1774, p. 251.

was named as Farmer and Lokenath Nundee Security. These people did not take possession of the farm but transferred it to Kisna Nund Sircar of Calcutta and Kundurp Doss of Hooghly, whose agents transacted all Business in the name of Cantoo Baboo.⁷⁴ C. Croftes, Accountant General, wrote almost in the same manner. 'In reply to the requisition, the Governor General and Council have been pleased to direct you to make of my Proofs that the Farms of Bissenpore and Patchet were held by Cantoo, as set forth in the list delivered by me, I am to inform you that I received my information from the Offices of the Khalsa, when I took from them a general list of Cantoo's Farms. I have demanded of them their vouchers for inserting Bissenpore and Patchet in the list. They have delivered me the following papers, which I now enclose :—

1st. Bissenpore Kistibundy for 1179 signed by Ramconai, Govinpersaud and Kissenpersaud, Farmers.

2nd. Bissenpore Kistibundy for 1180 signed as above.

In the above mentioned Kistibindies of Bissenpore for 1179 and 1180 the Security is said to be Kissennund Sircar, formerly a servant of Cantoo, but they are not signed by Kissennund.

3rd. Estaffa :to which are annexed the names of Gorachand Nundee, brother of Cantoo; Ramconai, Govindpersaud and Kissenpersaud, Farmers, requesting to relinquish the farms of Bissenpore and Patchet'.

When these papers were placed before the Council on 13 May 1777 it was proved that Gorachand Nundee's name was written by some other person while the last three names were written by the same hand.⁷⁵

Hastings justly wrote to Maclean on 20 November 1776 'I am much pleased with Mr. Graham's Papers upon the subject of Cantoo Baboo's Farms. It is equally just and complete, except in one fact, with which he was unacquainted, namely the two of the most Capital Farms Bissenpore and Patchet never were Cantoo's. This I have repeatedly told the Court of Directors and I have a right to be believed. Those who have affirmed the fact should prove it. I am not to bring proofs of an nega-

⁷⁴Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 6 May 1777, p. 2087.

⁷⁵Ibid., of 13 May 1777, p. 2227-2229.

tive—yet this is what I shall do.’⁷⁶ The above facts show that he did it to the hilt.

The statement of 17 March 1775 presented before the Board also showed that Kantababu had nothing to do with these farms. Clavering was however not at all convinced and proceeded in trying to prove that Hastings was not placing all the facts before the Council. The proceedings of 22 and 25 April 1777 bear testimony to the rather tiresome methods of argument adopted by the General⁷⁷ which did not succeed in proving that Bissenpore and Patchet was farmed by Kantababu. Particularly to convince the Court of Directors, Hastings sponsored a petition from Kantababu in which he not only denied his association with these farms but also explained how the name of his brother and son got involved. This extremely interesting petition throws much light into the dispute.

‘Present — The Governor General, Lieut. General Clavering, Richard Barwell and Philip Francis. The Governor General lays before the Board the Petition of Cantoo Baboo. Ordered the Translation be entered into the Proceedings.

‘The Petition :—

The Governor General has informed that it has been represented by some person to the Company in England that a settlement was made with me on low terms either as Farmer or Mhalzamin for the Pergunnah of Bissenpore and the Tannah of Patcheat, that larger remissions and deductions were granted to me and that I was allowed to give up my engagement before the expiry of this settlement to very great loss to the Government and that the Company have in consequence conceived the highest displeasure. This information is evidently false and contains nothing but the most astonishing calumny from the beginning to the end, for I have not the least concern with the people to whom these Mhals were let in that transaction. The following account will set the matter in a true point of view.

‘I accompanied the Governor and the Gentlemen of the Committee when they went to Cossimbazar for the purpose of making the settlement in the year 1179. Mr. Aldersey and Mr. Barwell being employed about

⁷⁶Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29128, f. 14.

⁷⁷I.O.R. Bengal Revenue Consultations, Range 49, Vol. 70, Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 22 and 25 April 1777, p. 20-30, and p. 91-117.

the settlement at the same time in Calcutta, Cundrop Doss who is not my servant and with whom I had not any concern and Kishnanund Sircar who was only employed as a Gomastah by me in some salt concern, but never had served me in any other matter regarding Farms or Securityships of lands, presented an application to them in the names of Ram Conny, Govind Persaud and Kishen Persaud, people whose names or persons I never was acquainted with and who indeed for what I know do not exist, but are merely fictitious, for Pergunnah Bissenpore and one in the name of Gorachand for the Tannah Patcheat. These proposals being accepted Kishnanund caused his own name to be written for the Securityship of Bissenpore and the name of Lucknaut Nundy for that of Tannah Patcheat, and having received the Amulnama from the Government and delivered in a Cabooleat. Condorp Doss and he agreed to share the profit and loss of the two Mehls equally between them and having sent officers with the concurrence of each other into the country, took possession of them accordingly.

‘Upon my arriving in Caclutta and hearing that Kishnanund Sircar, my salt Gomastah had in conjunction with Condorp Doss obtained the Farms of Bissenpore and Patcheat from Mr. Aldersey and Mr. Barwell in this manner; I immediately dismissed him from his employment of managing my salt concerns* while he and Condorp Doss continued and have always continued from the beginning to make the collections, to pay the Revenue and transact every part of the business of both Mehals without my having any kind of connexion with the Revenue of either one or the other of them.

‘My having a brother of the name of Gorachand and a son of the name Lucknaut Nundee may perhaps have given rise to the suspicion of my being concerned in the transaction, but neither I nor they in any wise are acquainted with it. From the time the Farms were taken to the time they were given up, no writings were ever sent or directed in our names either at the Sudder or Muffussil, neither did we in any manner possess, these Mehal. We never sent any people into the country nor even appeared either at the Sudder or Mufussil to answer for the business. In short, we never had any kind of connexion with it nor can it ever be proved that we had, while from the time the Farms were taken to the period on which they were relinquished, no writing or signature either of

* See the dispute between Kantababu and Krisnananda Sircar in Cantoo Baboo Volume I Chapter V.

mine or of my brother Gorachand or of my son Lucknaut Nundy or of any persons on our parts or deputed or appointed by us, can be produced in any one branch of the Business, either at Sudder or Mofussil. The charge is then entirely groundless and misplaced. Let the Company enquire into the Truth of the matter and do Justice in it.'⁷⁸

The echo of the affairs of Bissenpore and Patchet was heard for the last time in the Parliament ten years later. Replying to Philip Francis on 19 April 1787, Major John Scott challenged the ex-councillor by saying that nobody knew better than Philip Francis himself that though Kantababu held many considerable Farms but Bissenpore or Patchet was never one of them.⁷⁹

The opposition was deeply disturbed in not being able to prove the wrongdoing of Hastings in the case of Bissenpore and Patchet. The Majority was at it from the very beginning and Francis made sarcastic remarks on a letter from Croftes which reduced the outstanding balance of the Pargana by about 25 thousand Rupees as early as 25 February 1775, which were later placed in the Council.⁸⁰ At first this Majority felt that they had a hide bound case, cut and dried and fit to be put under the guillotine of the Court of Directors. As the matter became agitated the smoke screen of illusion created by Krisnananda Sircar evaporated and the Majority was frustrated in finding that they had no case at all. Whatever heat that could be generated in the Council of 29 February 1776 by the lively debate, was lost in the subsequent years when General Clavering is the lone voice feebly supported by Francis. One of the curious fact in the debates was that Krisnanand was recognised as a servant of Kantababu even when he did not produce an authority from him. This, fact remains unchallenged, yet from 29 February 1776, to 29 April 1777⁸¹ the same arguments are repeated over and over again. Hastings had a definite advantage here. As soon as the Midnapore matter was raised he brought in the Bissenpore question. The debate became so confused that it was difficult for the Court of Directors to disentangle the threads of the two cases and differentiate them. This confusion was aided by the fact that both the Midnapore and Bissenpore Parganas were relinquished.

⁷⁸Bengal Revenue Consultations. Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 29 April 1777, p. 254-256

⁷⁹Parliamentary Register. Vol. XXII, p. 112-113.

⁸⁰Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings of 22 April 1775, p. 1095-1097.

⁸¹Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings of 29 February 1776 and Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 29 April 1777.

Every time Clavering brought up the Midnapore relinquishment, Hastings replied that Bissenpore never belonged to his Banian, so there was no question of relinquishing it.

Jehangirpur and Hatinda

Both these Parganas were farmed in the name of Baisnabcharan Nundee. Here also as in other cases, the petition of the Farmer for reducing the Jumma is followed by a complaint from the Zemindar who suddenly discovers that in 1769 the farm was taken without his consent and then alleges that there have been oppression.

Thomas Henchman reported on 9 June 1773 that 'Beisnam Churn', the farmer of Jehangirpur and Hatinda has represented about the deficiency of his Revenue and petitions for deductions of Rs. 10,755-12-4, which the Fort William, writing on 15 June 1773 refused to admit.⁸²

On 20 April 1775 the Murshidabad Council of Revenue recorded the complaint of the Zemindar Bireswar Surmah (Chaudhuri) through his Vakeel who petitioned the Kissen Caunt Baboo had taken the Farm from the Committee without the consent of the Zemindar who was now being dispossessed by the Farmer. There is also an interesting story of how Nursing Baboo wanted the Farm cheaply for himself and duped the Zemindar after bright promises.⁸³ (There can be confusion as Bireswar Chaudhuri has been written as 'Berlissa Chowdrie') Nobody took any notice of the complaint. Maharaja Nandakumar was hanged. A severe draught gripped the country. The agricultural production fell. The superstitious Hindu considered the lack of rainfall as the effect of the sin of the Europeans. The Zemindars and Farmers in great numbers wrote for time to pay the Revenue which could not be collected because of dearth of rain. The petition of Baisnabcharan the Farmer of Jehangirpur, Hatinda, Chunacolly, Coolberia and the Wuazerabad Mahal has been recorded on the 4 December 1775.⁸⁴ Baisnabcharan complained on 3 February 1777 that Rs. 37000 was the balance due from Bireswar Chaudhuri, the Zemindar of Jehangirpore, which was promptly followed by an arzee of oppression made the Zemindar and his four sons namely

⁸²Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 15 June 1773, p. 249-254.

⁸³Proceedings of the Provincial Council of Revenue at Murshidabad of 20 April 1775, p. 215-216.

⁸⁴Ibid., of 4 December 1775, p. 911-912.

Cossinath, Bishnuram, Laxmikanta and Gaurykanta.⁸⁵ It was at this stage that Clavering took up the cause and heatedly debated in the Council. Clavering started by saying that deductions on the Revenue must not be allowed.

On 20 May 1777 a very lively debate was held with Clavering and Francis refusing to grant any deductions to the Farmer, while Hastings and Barwell pointing out that the Farmer was within his right to claim it as it was in his Pottah. Ultimately it was, 'Resolved that the claim do remain suspended for the judgement of the Court of Directors but that the matter be discussed and concluded as far as may be done by this Government, with such reservation as may allow the approbation or disapprobation of the Company to operate the decision'. Baber, the chief of the Council at Murshidabad was written, 'We desire you will transmit to us the proofs that, in the settlement made of Jehangirpur no deduction was made for the aiticles of Syer Chelunth, Bazzee, Jumma and Mowrocha and that you will call upon the Farmer to prove that he was promised deductions when the amount of the sum usually collected on those articles could be ascertained'.⁸⁶

Next year another fresh deduction was claimed in regard to Hatinda, the reason being that the land was infested with buffaloes, wild-hogs and tigers which resulted in depopulation, so a deduction of Rs. 6000 was claimed from the Revenue⁸⁷ (Jaggernaut Roy was the Zemindar of Pargana Hatinda—Prog. Prov. Council of Murshidabad of 26 June 1780, p. 495-497).

The Zemindar of Jehangirpur protested on 6 Assar 1185 complaining that, 'In the month of Bhadon last year, the Gentlemen of the Council at Murshidabad settled the Bundibust at the medium of 3 years collections, from the beginning of 1179 to the end of 1183, the Pergunnah was by the Committee's Bundibust given in Farm to Bushnoo Churn Nundee at a Russud of 15000 Rupees. This Jumma the Mofussil was unable to bear which occasioned the Farmer to prefer complaints at sundry places and as they were not limited to (sic), he was obliged to pay a considerable sum from his own property'. The Zemindar offered to pay a Revenue of

⁸⁵Ibid., of 3 February & 15 August 1777, p. 535.

⁸⁶Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 20 May 1777, p. 2358-2372.

⁸⁷Ibid., of 16 July 1778, p. 3571-3574.

Rs. 1,32,000 and take only Rs. 2900 as *Russud*.⁸⁸ Baisnabcharan patched up his differences with the Zemindar Bireswar Chaudhuri, who became his underfarmer, in the name of his four sons. Now the four sons of the Zemindar started to quarrel between themselves and in the process got the Zemindari divided between them. Presumably old Bireswar Chaudhuri was now dead and there was none to control the feuding brothers.⁸⁹ The accounts presented by Baisnabcharan in 1779 show a very large outstanding in both the Parganas. Here it is intriguing to note that old Bireswar Sarma who later called himself Bireswar Chowdhuri once again changed his name to become Bireswar Roy, the Katkenadar or under farmer of Pargana Jehangirnagar, in the name of his four sons who likewise became 'Cossinaut Roy, Lucky Caunt Roy, Bishenarain Roy and Gourey Caunt Roy'. The balance demanded from them was Rs. 61,302-4-11-1.

In Hatinda also the Zemindar Jagannath Roy had his son Kalisankar Roy appointed as the Katkenadar while his brother Dharanidhar Roy (written in Company accounts 'Derneeder Roy') was the Security to the underfarmer. Here the outstanding was the negligible sum of Rs. 3315-10-0.⁹⁰

These accounts show that the old Zemindars had awoken from their slumber and were trying to gain some lost ground by turning into underfarmers. Internecine quarrels often destroyed the Zemindars as was the case in Jahangirpur. Eight years later one Shibaprasad Roy claimed to be the Zemindar of 11 annas portion (full portion 16 annas or Re. 1) of Pargana Jahangirpore. He and his nephew Dharanidhar (probably not the Security of Hatinda) complained on 23 November 1786 that they were being deprived of their eleven annas share of the Pargana by the intrigues and collusions of Kantababu, Banian to the late Governor General, Mr. Hastings. They charged that they have been plundered of their personal property to the amount of 1,50,000 Rupees besides the demolition of their family house. Probably the complaint was exaggerated as in the latter half of the petition the real cause of annoyance becomes clear. They say, that in spite of the fact that the children of late Bireswar Roy had sold 11 annas of their property to them, they have not

⁸⁸Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 16 July 1778, p. 3567-3574.

⁸⁹Proceedings of the Murshidabad Council of Revenue of 20 December 1779, p. 703-716.

⁹⁰Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 30 July 1779, p. 151.

yet been given the possession of the portion which should be theirs, moreover Kantababu gives protection to the children of Bireswar Roy and have prompted them not to relinquish their possession of the Pargana. Shibprasad prayed for justice. The newly formed Board of Revenue asked for a detailed report.⁹¹ Nothing is known about the fate of the complaint or about the truth of the facts stated in the petition.

*Baharbund***

Now comes the last and the most important farm which later became the perpetual and hereditary property of Lokenath Nandy. This property became the sheet anchor to the family's fortune and was always considered as the mainstay of the Estate. Kantababu had to undergo a lot of difficulties in finally acquiring the property and came close to losing it absolutely several times. As a lot of political manoeuvring was necessary to chastise Hastings both during his lifetime and after his death, Baharbund was treated in the most cavalier fashion, as a proof of Hastings' naughtiness, without looking into the facts of history. In the first volume of this treatise (Chapter IV) it has been proved conclusively that Baharbund was not a gift of Hastings to Kantababu. In fact Kantababu held the Province in the name of his nephew Baisnabcharan popularly called Bisnoo Churn at least from 1772 or from before Hastings' arrival to Bengal. Baharbund had never been a part of Rani Bhawani's property after 1748 and was treated as a Jaigeer by the Subadars of Bengal. The confusion was created as the name of Rani Bhawani as the nominal Zemindar was allowed to continue. These facts were not disputed even by the Rani, who made a feeble and half hearted attempt to challenge the right of the farmer.* Burke, while making out a case for Impeachment of Hastings was not concerned with the details of factual history. He took the advantage of a sentimental speech and greatly influenced not only the Parliament but several generations all over the world when he impressed upon his audience that Hastings had taken the Baharbund Pargana out of the hands of a Brahmin widow and made a gift of it to his Banian.

The efficiency of Kantababu's administration is demonstrated in a very favourable light in Baharbund. Here his organising skill was fully

⁹¹Proceedings of the Board of Revenue of 10 January 1781, p. 10-11.

**The original name is Bahar Bunder; literal translation would be 'The Outer Port'

* The list of properties submitted by her in 1777 has no mention of Pargana Baharbund. IOR. Orme. Mss. O.V. 165B, 31 May to 12 Sept. 1777. Mss. Eur E51/D.

operative. As he gained control of the Province he slowly improved the the settlement which was both beneficial to him and the ryots. This he could of course do only after a tremendous amount of trouble which at a time seemed to be set to deprive him of his Province altogether. It was his intelligence and perseverance that saw him through the hard days between 1774 and 1779.

The Committee of Circuit recorded the seven years Jumma of the three Mahals which later came to be known as Baharbund Pargana in 1772 from which it was evident that the Jumma decreased annually.

	<i>Baharbund:</i>	<i>Bhitarbund:</i>	<i>Gayabari:</i>
1172 (1765-66) —	1,31,616- 9- 9-2	13,651-11-12	2,901-0-0
1173 —	1,29,665-12-10-1	11,324-12- 3	2,901-0-0
1174 —	1,23,034- 7-11-1	10,434- 0-12	3,173-0-0
1175 —	1,32,039-12- 5-0	13,437-13- 5	3,173-0-0
1176 —	1,16,993-14-17-3	13,546-10-10	3,173-0-0
1177 —	1,25,796- 1- 0-3	12,449- 8- 7	2,901-0-0
1178 —	1,18,941- 0- 3-0	13,371- 2- 3	2,901-0-0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	8,78,087- 9-17-2	87,215-10-12	21,123-0-0 ²
Annual average —	1,25,441- 1- 8-1	12,495- 6- 1-2	3,017-9-2-1

The Total of the three Mahals therefore comes to Rs. 1,40,918-0-12-0. The Farm of Baharbund was settled on Baisnabcharan in 1772 at Rs. 1,28,327-5-6 for five years which means that a Russud or collection charge of Rs. 12,590-10-7 was only allowed which was less than the usual 10 per cent. It was impossible for the Farmer to manage such a large farm with so many problems at less than 10 per cent establishment charges. As the problems have never been fully enumerated they need to be kept on record. Baharbund was regularly visited by decoits from Bihar and U.P. in the West, some of these groups came to be known as Sannyasins* and Udasins. These groups of mauraders visited North Bengal regularly and particularly Baharbund Pargana which was the most fertile area. The flooding of the rivers was also an annual manifestation, though that phenomenon was also responsible for the increased fertility of the Province. The Dharla and the Teesta both flew through Baharbund into

²Committee of Circuit at Rangpur. Appendices of 16 December, 1772, p. 42.

* Bankim Chandra Chatterjee in his 'Anandamath', the first nationalist novel has made the Sannyasins a politically motivated force operating in Birbhum and Burdwan, and getting ready, to forcibly wrest the yoke of the country from the Muslim Rulers. Published in Bengal in 1882.

the great and mighty river Brahmaputra. The overflow of water in any one of them meant the flooding of the Pargana. These two factors led to depopulation and in spite of the apparent fertility, the people of the Province lived clustered in small areas not far from each other, leaving a large area totally bare.

In spite of all the problems, the Farmer of Baharbund made the full collection in the first two years but collection became difficult as soon as trouble started regarding the Pargana in the Supreme Council and everybody felt that Kantababu may soon be deprived of the Farm of the Province. The Majority in their anger appointed a Sezawal for collecting revenue and Kantababu's Agents were suspended from going into the Province. This did not improve matters as the collection fell even further. A comparative study of the figures will be the best argument to put forward :

Year	Total Baharbund Collection:
1179 (1772-73)	Rs. 1,28,327- 6- 5-0
1180	Rs. 91,843- 9- 3-0
1181	Rs. 86,571-15-15-0
1182	Rs. 1,05,303- 8- 0-0*
1183	Rs. 1,12,804- 8- 0-0**
1184	Rs. 80,525- 0- 0-0 Under Sezwal or Agent.
1185 (1778-79)	Rs. 82,639- 0- 0-0 do do**
	<hr/> Rs. 6,88,014-15- 3-0

The annual average dropped to Rs. 98,287-13-12 only, but even this figure is not correct. Firminger gives the collection average of 5 years of the Farm as Rs. 95,781, add to it the two Sezawal years and the average collection figure drops to an all time low of Rs. 86,315. If these figures are carefully studied it will be revealed that when Lokenath Nandy agreed to take the Baharbund Pargana as his permanent hereditary property at the fixed Revenue of Rs. 82,639 which was the total collection of the year before, he was indeed taking a great risk. Firminger is absolutely correct in praising the venture, 'Then Lokenaut with great astuteness came forward and offered to take the estate on permanent lease which offer was accepted by the Council on October 20th 1779'. The sanad

**Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings of 22 April 1775, (Enclosure 1).

**Ven. W. K. Firminger. Ed. Bengal District Records. Rangpur (Calcutta 1920) Vol. I, p. 25-26 & 86.

* These are Jumma figures. The Collection was around Rs. 95000 as the average of the 5 years collection came to Rs. 95781 (Firminger).

included Baharbund, Bhitarbund and Gayabari.⁹⁵ Baharbund is therefore not a story of gift, grant and gratification but of enterprise, courage and industry. To quote Firminger once again, whose study of the Rangpur records is complete and exhaustive, 'The Baharbund Zemindar was the only one in Rungpore who began at once that course of scientific administration which has rendered this Zemindary one of the best managed in the District'.⁹⁶ Having discussed the case of Baharbund in a nutshell it will be now necessary for the sake of details to enter into the monotonous history of the dispute.

The contemporary scene was far from congenial. Lokenath Nandy prayed on 31 May 1774 that he be allowed a grant of the Pargana Baharbund as his *Jaaluh*—or perpetual and hereditary farm, on such terms as the Board will seem equitable.⁹⁷

After some deliberations it was unanimously agreed that the prayer of Lokenath Nandy for the Baharbund Pargana may be granted. A Sanad to this effect was ordered to be prepared. In the meantime William Lambert, the Chief of Dinajpore was written that the Board have thought it proper to invest Lokenath Nandy with the Zemindary of Baharbund and directed him to give him the possession of the property.⁹⁸ Rani Bhawani, the nominal Zemindar of Baharbund protested against this decision through her Vakil, who admitted that the Rani was never in possession of the property. The Canoongoes also in their report established the fact. The Rani's objections were therefore overruled and on 29 July 1774. It was once again unanimously 'Resolved that the Board do adhere to their determination on this subject, passed in the consultation, the 12th instant'.⁹⁹

Everything went on normally upto October 1774. After the arrest and death of Nandakumar, the Majority came to believe, as Clavering so often expressed, that Kantababu was behind 'the plot which caused the death of Nandakumar. They accused Hastings with Nandakumar's death as he was the greatest beneficiary. As Kantababu could not be touched in anyway it became the policy of the Majority to examine

⁹⁵Firminger, op. Cit.

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 31 May 1774, O.C. No. 17, p. 409-413.

⁹⁸Ibid., of 12 July 1774, p. 5500-5503.

⁹⁹Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 29 July 1774, p. 5631-5634.

every complaint that was made against him and to pursue them to their logical, sometimes illogical ends. Firminger's summary of the incident is quoted. 'In the year 1775 prior to the execution of Nandakumar, Clavering, Monson and Francis were busily engaged in looking for every possible twig that might form a birch wherewith to chastise the Governor General and his adherents. Lokenath being the son of Hastings' Diwan Kantababu, the matter of the Baharbund Zemindari came to the fore.' In a letter to the Court of Directors which appears in the Consultations of the Council of 22 April 1775, Hastings writes :—"The reasons which prevailed on the late Board to grant the Pergunnah Baharbund to Cantoo Baboo my servant, will appear in the Consultations of the 12th and 19th July 1774* in the Revenue Department. To those I refer, you will find that this is not a part of the Zemindary of the Ranny Bowanny nor even in her possession, but a Mahal or district depending immediately on the Government and lying in the frontier of the Province, that no kind of indulgence was shown to my servant in this grant, but an advantage provided by Government, by the peshkush or fine to be paid; and by the Security which the collections of it would naturally derive from being in the charge of a man of business and property".

"The Sunnud was never granted, though readily drawn up and in my possession, from the time of the order of the Council; nor of course, the peshkush paid, because I chose to defer the confirmation of it till the assembly of the New Council."

"The Majority in their meeting of the 17th instant have thought fit and proper to deprive Cantoo Baboo of this grant for reasons which they are yet to seek; one indeed they have assigned, namely, that the person in whose name it was granted was described as a man of credit and property, but proved on enquiry to be a boy of ten years age. You, Gentlemen, need not be told that it is the constant practise of the Gentoo to register all deeds and contracts, and apply for all grants, in the names of their sons. Lokenaut Nundee, the nominal Zemindar, is the son of Cantoo Baboo; whom the Board intended by the above description."¹⁰⁰

* This should be 29 July 1774. The mistake made in Hastings' statement in the printed copy of the Secret Proceedings made in 1890, has been, it seems, repeated everywhere. It could be the printer's devil. Firminger may have worked with the same source. See Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 29 July, 1774, pp 5631-5634.

¹⁰⁰Firminger, op. cit. Vol. II, p. IV & V intro. and p. 235-239 and George E. Forrest, Ed., Selections from Letters, Despatches and other State papers preserved in the Foreign Dept. of Govt. of India 1772-1785 (Calcutta 1890) Vol. II No.9 of Secret Department of 22 April 1775, p. 90-107.

The Majority had reasons to be angry with Kantababu. He had defied the summons of the Majority on 13 March 1775. On 31 March 1775 came the letter of Joynal Abedin and the affair of the Hooghly Foujdar was discussed in the Council. The Majority was now certain that if the Banian could be caught with some proof of his misdeeds it would serve both the purposes of teaching the insolent native a good lesson (Clavering wanted to put him in stocks) and also create a case of nepotism against the Governor General, and help in removing him from his office. As the officials of the Government knew this fully they divided themselves into two camps.

Before the fateful meeting of 22 April 1775, which has been quoted above, there was already another report. On 31 March 1775 the following Resolutions were recorded. 'It appearing before the Board that Lucknaut Nundy a youth of 10 or 11 years of age, the son of Caunto Baboo, the Governor's Banian, has received an Aumeelnama or order of possession of the Zemindary of Baharbund, that this youth has been represented to the Court of Directors as a man of substance and credit, and that no money has been received by the Hon'ble Company for the grant of the above Aumeelnama'. On 22 March 1775, Charles Croftes, Accountant General reported that no money had been received on account of the Baharbund Pargana.¹⁰¹

The whole matter about Lokenath being a man of substance and credit had to be left to the Court of Directors as all papers had been submitted there. A year passed. Now the Majority started indulging themselves in their favourite hobby of receiving complaints. The plan of the present complaint was a tricky one. Though Gayabari and Bhitarbund had been merged in the Jumma of Baharbund, as shown earlier, which came to be known as only Baharbund Pargana in the Government papers; the collections in those places were done separately and their independent status was maintained. The motive was to prove that Gayabari was a separate District that was being farmed by Kantababu and which was never reported or brought to the attention of the Court of Directors. With this end in view Clavering's minute was recorded on the 11 June 1776. He proposed that the Secretary should ascertain and inform the Board whether Gayabari was one of the Farms held by Cantoo Baboo, of which a list was sent last year to the court of Directors. Clavering's minute was

¹⁰¹IOR. Bengal Revenue Consultations. Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 31 March 1775, p. 1342-1343.

made to insinuate that this Pargana was not included in his Zemindary of Baharbund.

After recording the minute General Clavering placed a complaint against the Banian from the farmers of Gayabari.

'We your petitioners have long been the Farmers of Gayabaree dependent on Baharbund. Nagin (*Nazir*) Deo had for a considerable time rented the said Pergunnah for 2931 Rupees. In the Bengal year 1181 the said Farm was granted to Kishno Cantoo Baboo on the same terms. For the past two years the Gomastahs of the said Baboo have oppressed and plundering us and disposing of our effects have raised the sum of 16000 Rs. Some Ryotts are still in confinement. On these accounts being unable to remain in the Districts we complained during two months to the said Baboo at Cossimbuzzar but could not obtain redress. We have therefore brought our complaint here and entreat that a letter be sent to the Chief at Dinajpur to restore to us, after investigation, what has been improperly taken from us. That the Ryotts in confinement may be released and as we are not contented with the said Baboo, that some other responsible person be appointed to his Farm, who will give security for his administration.'

After the petition was read there was a veritable pandemonium in the Council. The Governor General moved that the Petition and its translation both may be sent to the Chief of Dinajpore with orders to make a strict enquiry into the truth of the complaint and especially to ascertain whether the farmer of Gayabari or his agents have collected a larger Revenue from the Ryotts, than from the tenor of his Aumilnama and the 'usage of the Country', he was entitled to. Clavering immediately objected to the words 'usage of the Country'. Hastings explained, 'I do not mean to oppose the usage of the Country to the Aumilnama, but that the usage of the Country may be ascertained with respect to such points only as are not specified or provided in the Aumilnama.' Severe discussion ensued, Monson, Clavering and Francis opposed strongly the words 'usage of the Country'.

The next scene opened rather dramatically with the Governor General cross-examining Rameswar Das the foreman of the tenants of Gayabari who had brought the complaint to Clavering. 'Governor General questions :Is Ghyabarry the name of the Pergunnah ?

Ans : Yes.

Q. Does it belong to the Zamindarry of Baharbund ?

A. It was formerly under Baharbund, it is now separate from it.

Q. When was it separated ?

A. In 1181.

Q. Who is the Farmer of Ghyabarry ?

A. Cantoo Baboo.

Q. Is he the Farmer or under farmer ?

A. Head Farmer.

Q. From what year was he Farmer ?

A. From the beginning of 1181 to the end of 1182.

Q. Who was the Farmer in 1180 ?

A. Nazerdeo, the Naib Zemindar of Coochbyhar paid the Rents to the Ranny.

Q. What Ranny ?

A. To Rani Bhowanny.

Q. Did you or any of the Ryotts ever make complaint to the Chief of the Council at Denagepore ?

A. We complained to the Gentlemen of Denagepore but no attention was paid to us.

General Clavering Questioned: How many Ryotts were in confinement ?

A. When we left the Muffusul there were fifty people in confinement.

Q. Do you know the names of the persons who are in confinement ?

A. Yes.

Ordered that he do deliver the list of names of the Ryotts who are in Confinement. Complied as under.

Binodram, Muhla, Niwisea, Sarua, Tunooram, Dyal, Suniram, Shadoo, Myboor Khawn, Toolee, Purshoo, Palaloo, Vhoola, Daljee, Jiboi, Ayer Khawn, Tuttoo, Jhog, Caula Chand, Pyaloo, Durgaram, Ram Khullan, Jyshaine, Juiteram, Munu, Cathooram, Mundoo, Khilly Khullan, Jointee, Brader Shaprea, Dayaram, Kellah, Corah, Baundeen, Kurdairam, Madow Khullan, Renoo (could be Munoo), Puttiram, Dubee, Shuroo etc. in all fifty persons—signed Ramessur Doss.

Q. For what are they confined ?

A. They were called upon to pay some money and upon their refusal to do it representing that they would pay nothing more than what was established, were put under confinement.

Q. Were you confined ?

A. Yes. We were all confined.

Q. Who do you mean by all ?

A. All the principal Ryotts.

Q. Did you apply to Cantoo Baboo for relief ?

A. We complained to Cantoo Baboo that his Gomastah was oppressing us and Cantoo Baboo answered by telling us to go beg.

Q. How many persons are come down here to complain ?

A. Twenty-five people. Five of whom are gone to Chandernagore.

Governor General Questioned: Do you remember at what time you complained to Cantoo Baboo ?

A. The 24th of Bysack.

Q. Who complaining with you ?

A. I cannot tell.

Q. Was Bopaul with you ?

A. Bopaul and other Ryotts were present.

Q. Where was Cantoo Baboo when you complained to him ?

A. In his House.

Bopaul being called in is questioned and answered as follows :—

Governor General Questioned : Did you ever complain to Cantoo Baboo of the exactions made by his Gomastah ?

Bopaul answered : Yes.

Q. What answer did you get ?

A. That we were allowed to settle here out of charity and might go away in the same manner.

Q. When did you complain to Cantoo Baboo ?

A. I do not remember the particular day, it was in the month of Chyet.
(He later corrects himself and says it was in the month of Bysack).

Q. Where was Cantoo Baboo ?

A. In a hall such as this.

Q. At what house ?

A. In his own House.

Q. At what place ?

A. At a place which I heard called 'Cantoo Cutcherry.'

Q. What town or country ?

A. At Cossimbazar.

Q. Did you ever complain to the Council at Denagepore ?

A. I did but nobody attended to me.'

The Governor General immediately addressed a letter to W. Harwood, Chief of Dinajpur. 'Enclosed we transmit you the copy of a Petition which has been delivered to us by two Ryotts of Ghyabarry against Cantoo Babu, the Farmer of Baharbund. We direct that you make strict enquiry into the truth of the complaint and ascertain whether the farmer or his Gomastah has collected a larger Revenue than from the tenor of his Aumulnama, he was entitled to receive from the Ryotts or they by their Pottahs were obliged to pay. In case neither an Aumulnama has been granted to the farmer nor Pottahs given by him to the Ryotts, your enquiry must be regulated by the Jumma collected in the year 1180. The names of the Persons who are said to be confined are contained in the enclosed paper, which has been delivered to us by Ramissur and Bopaul the two complainants.'¹⁰²

As soon as the excitement of the debate abated, the Secretary reported to the Board that, 'the Pergunnah Gayabaree appears to have been included in the Hustobood of Baharbund etc. on which the Committee of Circuit farmed the settlement of that Pergunnah and that no separate settlement appears to have been made of the Pergunnah Gayabaree.' Harwood was immediately asked to report whether Gayabari was included in the original settlement of Baharbund, whether it was at any time separated or whether its possession belonged to a different person.¹⁰³

¹⁰²Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 11 June 1776, p. 1676-1684 and 1668-1669.

¹⁰³Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 21 June 1776, p. 1939-1940.

While the complaints of the Ryotts of Gayabari were enquired into and Harwood 'had reported on 2 July 1776 that a full report of the findings would be submitted after completion of the enquiry started with immediate effect, the 'Farmers' of Baharbund made a complaint to the Board.¹⁰⁴ As the Gayabari complaint referred to the obscure rights of Nazir Deo, the Baharbund farmers in a similar manner tried to invoke Rani Bhawani as their Zemindar. 'The Petition of the Farmers of the Pergunnah Baharbund etc. and Sircar Bungal Bhoom.'

'That Canto Baboo who Farmed the above Pergunnah etc. for five years, agreed before the Committee, that he the said Baboo shall not make any exactions on the lands or on the Ryots than the Taxes enacted to him, excepting on the Produce of 'Pottit' or ruined lands. The said Baboo within the space of four years made an exaction such as Mottoh and Chund which obliged us to sale off our effects, cows etc., been our utter ruin, to the amount of 62000 Rupees as also his Gomastah, Hircarrahs etc., besides he has made considerable impositions. Besides an exaction he raised from the following charity lands such as Davytur, Birmutter, Naugrage (Debuttur, Bramhattor, Lakhraj*), these taxes were ever forbidden to take. Also the said Baboo dismissed Ranny Bowanny's Gomastah who was stationed in the above Pergunnah for about 2 years.'

The action of the Governor General established for the first time the right of the accused to defend himself. Hitherto the Government acted as the sole arbitrator and the accused had no opportunity, particularly the Indians, to say anything in their favour. Now that right was extended to the individual concerned. It may also be noted that Rani Bhawani who was at this time residing permanently in Murshidabad (Barangagore) did not have any intention to meddle in the affair or claim any right to the property whatsoever.

These two petitions started a veritable duel of statements and counter statements between the Governor General and General Clavering. The reason being always, to impress the Court of Directors in London. Clavering's intention was to discredit Hastings while the Governor General was fighting for his honour with his back to the wall.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., of 16 August 1776, p. 2866-2867, 2818-2822.

* Debuttar, land for worship of Gods, Bramhattor, land given to Brahmins, Lakhraj, tax free land.

The complaint against Kantababu thus assumed such monumental proportions, that it became urgently necessary for Hastings to win the case.

After the very interesting verbal warfare, which will be presently quoted, Hastings agreed to the appointment of a *Sezawal* or Government Collector in Baharbund for two years i.e., in 1184 (1777-78) and 1185 (1778-79), who collected the total sum of Rs. 80,525 and Rs. 82,639 respectively in place of the total annual average collection of Rs. 95,781 achieved by Kantababu. This enabled Hastings to get an unanimous decision in the Board to grant the permanent hereditary right of Baharbund to Lokenath Nandy at a permanent fixed revenue of Rs. 82,639 which was the amount collected by the *Sezawal* in 1185. This summary is being presented here so that the quotation of exchanges between Hastings and Clavering may not confuse the reader.

The Proceedings of the Council at Dinajpore on the enquiry on Gayabari was recorded on 27 December. The manner in which the Proceedings were recorded and the way in which they were conducted did not satisfy Hastings. Moreover the accounts of Shamlal, the Gomastah of Nazir Deo were incorporated in the Proceedings creating confusion all around. The Council at Dinajpore did not comprehend the accounts carefully. Though Shamlal was the Gomastah of Nazir Deo of Cooch-behar, his account collections were added to the collections made by the Gomastahs appointed by Kantababu. Every account without fail showed this mistake and though the Council at Dinajpore agreed that Shamlal had nothing to do with Kantababu, they did not separate the accounts. Thus the *Wassilut* given by the Ryots of Gayabari showed :

Collected by Kishen Mungal	— the year 1182	— Rs.	3,639-14- 6-0
Do by Adjeetnarain	— the year „	— „	3,488-11- 2-2
Do by Shamlal	— the year „	— „	15,725-13-12-0

Even the account delivered by Shamlal himself varied but, little from those submitted by the Ryots of Gayabari :—

Collected by Kishen Mungal and Rukkiakur	— Rs.	3,225-14-18-2
Do by Adjeetnarain	— „	3,641-15- 2-2
Do by Kishen Mungal	— „	766-10- 0-0
Do by Shamulal	— „	14,128- 8- 0-0

Hastings angrily remarked that, 'I will defy any Man living, whatever degree of sagacity he may possess or experience in the business of Revenue,

to find out any kind of connection between the facts as here stated and the inference drawn from them, which appears to me indeed to use the words above written unauthorised, unusual, arbitrary and unjust'... 'First, that account Joydaud means an account of what the District was capable of producing and was delivered to the Gomastah, who was not an Agent of Cantoo; by his Principal Nazir Deo, the Dewan of the Rajah of Cooch-behar, who held the underfarm and the entire possession of Gyabarry at the time alluded to, and therefore even if it were proved that the Gomestah had been guilty of undue exactions he and his principal only were accounted for them.

'Secondly, that no account delivered by Nazir Deo, however authenticated by him, could be legal order (?) to his Agent for making his collections.

'These could be judged by an inspection of the Mofussul papers or the papers containing the accounts kept in the Catcheries of the Pergunnah'. He concluded, 'In reply to the ungenerous insinuation with which the General's protest concludes and which I might be well dispensed from answering I shall content myself with saying that the materials are ready and on the spot on which Cantoo Baboo professes to refute the charges which have been made against him, and if I trust to my own judgement they contain the fullest refutation.'¹⁰⁵

General Clavering's case lay entirely on the findings of the Dinajpore Council which Hastings refused to consider as a regular enquiry. Their concluding resolution was : 'It is proved from the papers produced during the course of enquiry and by the acknowledgement of Shamulal, Kishen Mungul and Rukkiakur that the exorbitant sum of Rs. 21,763 has been collected account the Rents of Giabarree Talooks although the proper Jumma amounts to no more than Rs. 12,381. It also appears that by far the greatest part of the money has been expended and misapplied by the above named Gomastahs. The Chief is therefore requested to order them into confinement... And as the Riotts are not altogether undeserving of censure for the delay they have occasioned in the course of this examination, they are reprimanded for their behaviour and told to be careful to come better prepared, should it hereafter be found necessary to summon them on a like occasion.' Clavering started the debate on 10

¹⁰⁵Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 27 December 1776, 10 and 17 January 1777.

January 1777 by protesting against the way that the minute was drafted. Francis supported him. By 17 January the debate was in full swing.¹⁶⁶

With the advent of 1777 the clash between the Governor General and his opposition became more acute. The death of Colonel Monson in September 1776 had destroyed the Majority, so it became the solemn duty of the opposition to discredit the Governor General before his employers. All debates and diatribes performed in the Supreme Council was solely for the benefit of the Court of Directors. The acting on the Calcutta stage was to impress the audience and critics in London. The trouble with the Marhattas merely contributed to making the general situation more complicated than ever.

On 18 February, 1777, Hastings recommended the removal of Harwood from the Pargana and submitted an exhaustive statement of affairs so that the Court of Directors might understand the complicated situation. It also served as a reply to the minute submitted by Clavering two days earlier.

'At the close of the last despatch for England, I objected to a paragraph in the General letter from the Revenue Department reporting the result of an enquiry into a complaint of the Ryotts of Gyabarree against Cantoo Bahoo, which in my opinion contained a partial account of it. I at the same time informed the Board that he was preparing an answer which I now deliver in and shall only add to it such remarks as may enable the Court of Directors to judge the matter, which however trivial, has been so industriously pointed out to their attention.

'The Pergunnah of Gyabarree is part of the District of Baharbund, which was farmed by Cantoo Baboo, in the name of Beshnoo Churn in Bengal year 1179. For several years before it had been held by Nazer Deo, the Dewan to the Rajah of Cooch Beyhar, then independent of Bengal, at an annual quit Rent of 2931 Rupees. As the Farmer was liable for the Revenue of the whole District, he certainly had a right to the Rents of this portion of it. Two years, however, elapsed, before he obtained possession. In the Bengal year 1181, he sent his officers to farm a settlement of Gayabarree; and Nazer Deo agreed to hold it under him at a certain Rent. Upon failure in his payment, Cantoo Baboo in the year

¹⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 5822-5848, 86-102 & 100-108.

1182 was under the necessity of again sending his own officers who remained there and collected the Rents for a few months. In the month of Aughun of the same year, Nazer Deo again obtained the possession and management of Gayabarree upon a promise of greater punctuality in his payments. Shamlall was appointed his Agent and Cantoo's officers ceased to collect the Rents till the end of the year 1182. This is the sum of the accompanying Answer'. After the factual preamble Hastings proceeded to clarify why the investigation made by the Dinajpur Council was considered to be faulty.

'In the month of June last, General Clavering delivered in a Petition of some Ryotts of Gyabarree, complaining that Cantoo Baboo's Agents had exacted from them an undue Rent and praying that, "what had improperly been taken from them might be returned". This Petition was referred to the Provincial Council of Denagepore, who were directed by the Board to regulate their enquiry by the terms of the Farmer's Aumulnama, by the Ryotts Pottah or in case neither an Aumulnama had been granted to the Farmer or Pottahs given to the Ryotts, they were ordered to examine the complaint by the Jumma of the year 1180. The Council of Denagepore have transmitted their enquiry for the decision of the Board. But instead of following the Mode so accurately laid down to them by us, their Proceedings contain, on the one hand a bare representation of the assertions of a few Ryotts that an extra-ordinary Rent had been collected from them, and on the other, account given by the Persons against whom they complain. The Aumulnama or the Farmer's Lease is not referred to or once mentioned. The Pottahs are produced to shew the Rent at which the complainants held their land; no authentic accounts of their Jumma for 1180 or the Revenue collected from them in former years; no receipts or other documents to prove the sums that they actually paid in the year 1182 to which the complaint is confined. The Mundals, Putwaris and other inferior officers of the villages, whose testimony in default of written vouchers might have served to confirm or invalidate the complaint, are not examined or even called upon in the course of the Enquiry'.

In his vigorous defence Hastings did not spare Clavering either. He wrote, 'Upon what principle such an examination could be deemed by General Clavering regular, authentic and juridical or on what grounds it appeared to him from the Proceedings of the Denagepore Council that, "a large surplus collection has been made;" I am at a loss to discover.

Exactions of undue Rent can only be ascertained by a comparison of the amount of the Rent which the Ryot or the whole Pergunnah should pay, with the sum which he or it actually have been made to pay. But in the Proceedings at Dinajpore neither the due Revenue of the whole Pergunnah of Gyabarree nor the established Rent of any one Ryot having been ascertained, we are left without a standard by which to form a Judgement. If the exactions set forth in the original complaint of the Ryots were proved, the prayer for their petition 'that what has been improperly taken from them may be restored', should be granted.

'But without a knowledge of the just rents and actual payments, I defy any man to determine what or whether anything has been improperly taken; and therefore it is impossible for us, from this *authentic* and *regular* Proceedings, to give redress to the Ryots supposing that they really have suffered exactions.'

Hastings proceeded to prove the allegations against Kantababu false. 'But so far from any proofs of exactions on the part of Cauntoo Baboo's officers, the Proceedings of the Council of Denagepore, in opposition to the decision in which they have passed, contain the strongest presumptive evidence to the contrary. It appears that the Rents of Gyabarree for the year 1182 were collected by persons named Kishen Mungul, Rukkeakur, Adjeetnarrain and Shamu Loll. The three first named were Cauntoo Baboo's officers; the last according to his own declaration reported in the Proceedings of Denagepore, was appointed by Nazir Deo, when Cauntoo again farmed, "the lands to him". For the conduct of the man Cauntoo Baboo is surely in no wise responsible. Shamu Loll must answer for himself or his master Nazir Deo, under whose orders he acted, must answer for him. It appears by the declaration of the Ryots (and they will hardly be suspected of having exaggerated the accounts) that the Jumma of Gyabaree previous to the year 1182 and when the Pergunnah was in the hands of Nazir Deo amounted to Rupees 12,381-0-2-1. It appears also by the accounts of collections given in by the Ryots that Kishen Mungul and Adjeetnarrain collected Rupees 6,928-9-8-2. The account given by Shamu Loll states that the whole collections of Kishen Mungul, Rukkeakur and Adjeetnarrain at Rupees 7,634-8-1-0 and these people themselves state it at no more than 4,000 Rupees. Whichever of these sums we take, it will show that the collections made by Cauntoo Baboo's officers during the year 1182 and while Gyabarree remained under their management did not much

exceed one half of the Jumma of former years. So that, If any exactions have been made upon the Ryots, Shamu Loll and his master Nazir Deo must account for them'.

Concluding Hastings said, 'These conclusions are drawn only from the Enquiry made by the Council at Denajpore. I have not attempted to support them by any of the circumstances mentioned in Cauntoo's answer, which I leave without comment'.

Kantababu's petition in the name of 'Bishnoo Churun, the Farmer of the Pergunnah of Baharbund' was presented immediately, (It may be noted here that Baisnabcharan the original farmer of Baharbund continued, as the Pargana was not formerly transferred to Lokenath Nandy, whose petition of 1774 had been approved by the Council). 'Bisnoo Churn' petitioned :—

'Nazir Deo, son to the brother of the Rajah of Cooch Behar is Nowashee or independent, upon the strength of this took possession of the Pergunnah of Kejadee (Gyabarree) and unjustly and wrongfully refusing to give any account to the Aumil and Farmer of the Pergunnah of Baharbund, of his own inclination used to give into the Sircar of Rungpore as a kind of present (called Naalbundy) the sum of Sicca Rupees 2931-4 annas and 10 gondas, which sum the Aumil and the farmer of the Pergunnah of Baharbund were allowed in their accounts at the year's end. In the Bengal year 1179 the farm of the Pergunnah Baharbund in which the Pergunnah of Kejadee is included, was let to me by the Company on a 5 year's lease. After settlement of the Bundobust, Nazir Deo would not have anything to do with me or with the Seekdar, who was placed there on my account and whom he was called upon for the Malguzarry of the Pergunnah Kejadee, he returned for answer, that he would account for his Malguzzary at Rungpore in the same manner as he had done hitherto.

'In the Bengal year 1179 Nazir Deo did not account for his Malguzzarry with me, but paid to the Gentlemen stationed at Rungpore the sum of 2901 Rupees under the denomination of Naalbundy aforesaid and the said sum was allowed me in the accounts of the Pergunnah of Baharbund; but I was not put into possession of or had any power in the Mofussil.

'In the Bengal year 1180, the said Nazir Deo, not accounting to me for any of the dues of Government, paid to the Gentlemen of the Council at Denagepore the sum of 1000 Rupees and the said sum was allowed in my accounts, and in that year also I could get no possession of or power in Mofussil.

'In the Bengal year 1181 I sent Cossinaut Mojundar into the Pergunnah of Baharbund for the purpose of making a Bundobust for that Pergunnah. Nazir Deo aforesaid unjustly refused to account for his Revenue present and in arrears into the month of Kartick in the said year. Wherefore Cossinaut sent Koorang Sing into the Pergunnah of Kejadee to take possession of the administration thereof. Kyan Doss, Gomastah of Nazir Deo, his dependent, waited upon the said Sing and delivered to him the papers of the Hustobood of the said Pergunnah for the Bengal year 1180 and also brought the Putwaries or officers of the collections who likewise did absolutely produce a small portion of the Malguzarry which they had collected. Upon which the said Kyan Doss, Gomastah of Nazir Deo, accompanied Cossinaut Mojundar to the Cutcherry of the Pergunnah of Baharbund and demanded a Bundobust of the Pergunnah and that the Hustobood might not be inspected. On which account he agreed to the Malguzarry of 3000 Rupees increase upon the former sum and gave a Cabooleat for the aggregate sum of Rupees 5932-4 annas and 10 gondas, in the name of Ram Persaud Chuckerbutty, Dewan to the said Nazir Deo and Kyan Doss himself in his own name became the Malzamin for the same; and having also acknowledged the Balances due on the year 1180 being Rupees 1961-9 annas Sicca, making altogether the sum of Rupees 7893-13 annas and 10 gondas caused to be dismissed from his employ the said Koorang Sing and the said Sing had remained in the Mofussil from the month of Aughun 1181 to the month of Maug, in the same year. The papers of the Hustobood signed by the Gomastah of Nazir Deo' amounted to the sum of about 16800 Narrainny Rupees and the papers of Receipts amounted to the sum of 16800 Narainny Rupees also, and in the same year the said Kyan Doss accounted for the sum of Rupees 3713-1 anna and 13 gondas and unjustly detained in Balance the sum of Rupees 4118-15 annas and 17 gondas of which he would make no payment.

'In the Bengal year 1182 the said Cossinaut made the said Pergunnah become coss (Khas) on account of the extreme procrastination and delay of Nazir Deo in the Malguzarry and sent into Mufussil, Kishen

Mungle, Ajeet Narain and Reghiakerr successively to collect the Rent and from the month of Assen to the month of Aughun in the same year they collected and transmited the sum of Rupees 2200-9 annas and 14 gondas.

‘The Vakeel of Nazir Deo charged with letters from Nazir Deo and from Kyan Doss arived at Cossimbuzar and gave in proposals to farm the Pergunnah of Kejadee and gave a Tahood for the sum of Sicca Rupees 8001 and Shamu Loll became the Malzamin*, whom the said Vakeel sent into the Mofussil farm with one of his own men and the said Shamu Loll dispatched from thence the sum of Sicca Rupees 3498-10 annas and 5 gondas.

‘Several Ryotts materially injured by the oppressions of the said Farmer and Malzamin came to Cossimbuzar in the month of Maug 1182 and complained of the said two persons, that they could not remain in the country any longer under such oppressive administration and entrusted that the pergunnah might again be made coss; so that they might remain in tranquility and pay their Revenue. Upon this petition, Kishen Mungal and Ragheakerr were appointed Tahsildar and Peshcer of the said pergunnah and sent in to the Mofussil on the 7th of the month of Phalgoon of the said year.

‘Nazir Deo is justly indebted and aught to be called upon for the sum of Rupees 4180-11 annas and 17 gondas due at the end of the year 1181 and also for the further sum of Rupees 2301-11 annas and 15 gondas, account of the year 1182, both together making the sum of Sicca Rupees 6482-7 annas and 8 gondas. If Shamu Loll who is the Malzamin for the said Pergunnah on the part of Nazir Deo and not on my account, hath unjustly oppressed the Ryots, the Gentlemen will investigate the same. Kishen Mungol and Raghiakerr are the men employed by me and if they have collected more than they ought from the Ryots, whatever sum shall be proved upon them on enquiry, they will restore. This is a true statement and I hope for an equitable determination thereupon.

‘Statement of the Receipts and balances of Kejadee pergunnah.

New Narrany Sicca	Collected by Kishen	
and Sundry other	Mungol	Rs. 2,189- 0- 0-0
low Species		

* Malzamin or Mahlzamin—Mal is short for Mahl or Mahal meaning an area or District, zamin—is the person responsible or Security.

Batta 50% French Arcot	„	746- 5- 6-0		
	„	<u>1,442-10-14-0</u>		
Surf Sicca Batta 9 per cent	„	142- 7- 0-0		
	„	<u>1,300- 3-14-0</u>	Rs.	1,300- 3-14-0
Collected by Adjeet Narrain	„	1,498- 8- 0-0		
Batta 50% French Arcot	„	<u>499- 8- 0-0</u>		
	„	999- 0- 0-0		
Surf Sicca Batta 9 per cent	„	<u>98-10- 0-0</u>		
	„	<u>900- 6- 0-0</u>	Rs.	<u>900- 6- 0-0</u>
Total collected by Kishen Mungal and Adjeet Narain from Ashar to Aghun 1182				
			Sicca Rs.	2,200- 9-14-0
Collected by Shamu Loll Malzamin including the price of the Khelat	Sicca Rs.	1,786- 2- 6-0		
the price of Dhekkee ARS 2,000-0-0				
Surf Sicca 9% Batta 287-8-9	„	2,287- 8- 9-0	„	<u>3,498-10-15-0</u>
Total collected Sicca			„	<u>5,699- 4- 9-0</u>
Balance due from Kejadee Pergunnah at the end of 1181	„	4,180-11-17-0		
Jummah of the present Bundobust	„	<u>8,001- 0- 0-0</u>		
	„	12,181-11-17-0		
Balance remaining due to this day			Sicca Rs.	<u>6,482- 7- 8-0</u>
		<u>12,181-11-17-0</u>		<u>12,181-11-17-0</u>

Between them Hastings and Kantababu placed a water tight case before the Court of Directors. The mistakes were shown, the calculations clarified, the position of the Jumma explained year by year, the history of the case tallying with the statement of the complainants and accounts given, which presented a very clear picture of the Pargana eliminating the confusion that had been created earlier by the Dinajpur Council by presenting the accounts given by Shamu Loll, the Malzamin of Nazir Deo.

Clavering however was not satisfied and said so in the minutes. Unfortunately he could not refute the accounts and the facts. He expressed his anger in no uncertain terms, 'I have no objection to the Governor General's minute in justification of his Banian...but I confess I am surprised that he should consider a paper drawn up by an interested person of sufficient validity to refute or set aside the proof produced against his Banian before the Denagepore Council'. Hastings immediately replied, 'I apprehend that the General has not read my minute or if he

has, he has totally misconceived it. I have declared in it that I laid no stress whatever on the paper drawn up by Cantoo Baboo, but have refuted the charge against him solely on the materials which have been furnished by the Chief and Council of Denagepore. I have affirmed and still maintain that the enquiry was nothing less than judicial, that the charge of oppression even if it could have been proved, did not affect Cantoo or the Agents employed by him and that instead of being proved, there is the strongest presumption that it is false and groundless.' Clavering did not concede even at this stage and replied, 'I have not the letter and Consultation of Denagepore before me to compare the defence of Cantoo drawn by the Governor General with the facts as they are stated in the enquiry, nor do I conceive it is my business to do it. I have forgotten all the circumstances. The contest is not equal. The Governor General has had all the papers before him for above a month and then sends me his minutes to answer with assumptions in it that I cannot disprove by memory and particularly at the last moment of the closing of the packet.'¹⁰⁷ Thus ended the long drawn Proceedings of the Council of 18 February 1777.

The arguments were conclusive but the Court of Directors could not make any decision. As an interim measure a *Sezawal* or Government Collector was appointed and the granting of the *Sanad* to Lokenath Nandy was kept in abeyance.

Hastings married Mrs. Marian Imhoff on 8 August 1777 and Sir John Clavering died of dysentery on 29 August 1777.

The Baharbund affair came up a year later when the *Sezawal* presented his accounts on 26 May 1778.

'Representation of Sahebram Metre Sezawal deputed to make the collection of Pergunnah Baharbund (Lokenaute Nundee, Zemindar) for the year 1184 setting forth the present state of the Pergunnah.

Jumma as settled by the Aumeen deputed by the Governor General in Council in 1183	..	Rs.	1,24,510-14- 3-0
Deduct Mofussil Saranjomy, Putwarries and Cutwalls allowances	..	Rs.	11,291- 0-18-0
		Rs.	<hr/> 1,13,219-13- 5-0

¹⁰⁷Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 18 February 1777, p. 383-398.

Deductions :

(A) Deduct for uncultivated lands as settled by the Aumeen deputed by Governor General in Council	Rs. 10,977- 8-11-2
Increase made in 1184 by the Ryotts returning and cultivating of the land	Rs. 1,680-15-16-0
	<hr/>
	Rs. 9,296- 8-15-2

Sezwal's remarks: Upon an investigation and particular enquiry into the state of the Pergunnah this deduction was admitted.

(B) Allowances made to the Ryotts to cultivate that part of the lands that had been deserted, Pottahs being given them by the Zemindar's Naib for half their values as an encouragement to them to return	Rs. 641- 8-19-3
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Sezawal's remarks: This allowance was made to the Ryotts to encourage them to return and cultivate the lands. This year's increase is therefore only Rs. 1039-6-16-1.

(C) The rivers overflowing the country and totally ruining the crops on the ground, the Ryotts all ran away, as they were unable to pay their Malguzzary. They were therefore allowed a deduction of	Rs. 7,419-1-3-0
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Sezawal's remarks: The Ryotts are unable to pay this sum. The lands in part of the country being so very low (lying). This deduction also may be therefore allowed.'

The Council resolved, 'Ordered that the Jumma Wasil Baukee account of Rungpore and Hustabood Jumma of the Pergunnah Baharbund for the year 1184 be entered in the Appendice and copies of them transmitted with the other accounts to the Accountant'. The Council also commented, 'As the Zemindar of Baharbund would not agree for the Revenue of his District at the rate at which it was offered to him and an officer of the Government was deputed to make the collections, he is certainly not chargeable with the Balance which is stated against his lands for that year, but as it appears that the Zemindar held the District from April to October and must have made collections during that period he is accountable to the Government for the full amount of all the collections which can be proved to have been made by him from the District for that time.

'By the statement of the accounts of the Sezawal's, deputed on behalf of the government it appears as if he had investigated the Wasilhaut of the Zemindar and brought to the credit of the Government the whole of his Receipts and further that the Balance which is stated against the District arises from a defecient produce of Taxes and that the whole amount of the Receipts has been carried to account. It is not possible to pass any judgement on this statement of collection of Baharbund having only the report of the Sezawal to decide upon'. Charles Purling, the Collector of Rungpore was asked to submit a report whether the whole of the Revenue that has been collected from the District has been credited to the government or whether further collections had been made by the Sezawal or the Zemindar. He was further advised, 'For the current year you will make an offer of the lands to the Zemindar at the Jumma of 95,236-10-7 Rupees and in case of his refusing to be accountable for such Revenue you will give advice to the Superintendent of the Khalsa Records and publish the Zemindarry, to lease to the highest bidder, with a reservation of 10 per cent as a Moshaira to the Zemindar. Dated 26 May, 1778.' Philip Francis, the last surviving member of the once powerful Majority, remarked, 'I acquiesce in the Orders proposed to be given to the Collector of Rungpore.'¹⁰⁸

Another year of the Sezawal's collection proved to be a failure bringing down the total collection to 82,639 Sicca Rupees. It was at this juncture of time that Lokenath Nandy came forward and offered to take up the district. This petition of Lokenath made to Goodlad, the Collector of Rungpore on 17 June 1779 was read in the Council on 27 July of the same year.

'Translation of a petition of Lokenaut Nundee, Zemindar of Purgunnah Baharbund.

'The Purgunnah Baharbund etc. in Sircar Bengal Boom is my Zemindarry. In the Bengal year 1183, I was obliged to pay up the Russud etc. Bawkee according to the Committee's settlement, tho' the other Zemindars throughout Bengal were honoured with remissions. In the year 1184 I petitioned for deductions, which not meeting with approbation, a Sezawal was appointed on the part of the Government to take charge of my Zemindarry; the said Sezawal in that year collected according

¹⁰⁸Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 26 May 1778, p. 2834-2844.

to Hustobood and paid into the Treasury the sum of 80,525 Sicca Rupees and in this last year 1185 he paid the sum of 82,639 Sicca Rupees. From the favour and indulgences of the Gentlemen of the Council all the Zemindars of Bengal have been honoured with the management of their Zemindaries; I only have been excluded, and that for these two years past, in which time the Sezawal on the part of the government has fully investigated what my Zemindarry is able to produce, I therefore now hope, that indulgence which has been extended to all Zemindars in Bengal, may not be withheld from me and that you will from the goodness which they have experinenced at your hand, permit me also to have possession of my Zemindarry, at the net Revenue of 82,639 Sicca Rupees, being the amount paid by the Sezawal into the Treasury this last year, and that this may be my fixed Jumma that by attending to cultivation of my country, (I) may be enable to pay my Revenue to the Sircar and pray for the prosperity of that Government that has permitted me also to share the general indulgence the Zemindars have been honoured with.¹⁰⁹

Three days later Lokenath asked for the Sanad which had been held up since 12 and 29 July 1774. He wrote to the Council, 'The Zemindarry of Pergunnah Baharbund is granted in my name and the Dewance Sunnud for it has been prepared agreeably to order, but the delivery of it suspended on account of its not having been executed. As this Sunnud is necessary for establishing the title to the Zemindarry and for the satisfaction of Ryo-tts, I therefore hope, I may be favoured with it and the paishcush etc., dues of Government specified, shall be discharged, that having exerted myself with confidence in cultivating the country, I may be ready to discharge the Rent.'¹¹⁰ After all the papers were circulated, Francis and Whcler returned them with the word "Seen" but desisted from making any further comments. Barwell saw no objection in complying to the requests of the petitioner. Hastings sent his minute about granting the *Sanad* to Whcler to which the latter assented. An order was then issued to Goodlad, the Collector of Rungpore, for granting the *Sanad* to Lokenath. The Superintendent of the Khalsa Records was ordered to prepare the *Sanad* to be given to the Zemindar to Baharbund.

In the midst of all these activities Lokenath addressed a third petition to the Council. 'The farm of Baharbund etc. my Zemindarry including

¹⁰⁹Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 27 July 1779, p. 131-132.

¹¹⁰Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 30 July 1779, p. 149-159.

Russud was granted to Bisnoo Churn Nundee for five years. In Mr. Lambert's settlement of Dinajpore the Russud was struck off and this Purgunnah as well as the rest exempted from it. Unfortunately for me this was not approved by the Council altho' the original Rents of the Mahl had considerably fallen off. Being without remedy I discharged the full Rents together with the Russud to the end of 1183 putting up with a considerable loss. In 1184 a settlement was ordered to be made on a medium of the sudder receipts for three years. Finding I should be unable to bear the heavy yearly loss that must ensue, I gave in a statement of the capacity of my Zemindarry and offered to agree to a settlement of Rs. 80,000. This was not complied with and the collection remained Khas for the years.

'In 1185 an order was given the Gentlemen of Rungpore to offer the Zemindar the settlement upon the medium of the years 1180, 1181 and 1182 which amounted to Rupees 95,236-10 annas and if he refused those terms to make khas collection allowing the Zemindar 10 per cent for his Moshaira. As I could not afford to give it, the Khas collection took place for 1185, and notwithstanding a Sezawal was deputed and every means taken by the above Gentlemen to realise the collections, in 1184 only Rupees 80,759 was recovered and in 1185 Rupees 82,639; and out of this my Moshaira was not paid. Supposing it paid, it would come considerably short of that amount. While the Mahl is subjected to a Khas Collection and the Zemindar receives no Moshaira, how is the Zemindar to subsist or the ryotts to find encouragement to cultivate the lands. I have therefore presented a Petition to the Zilla, a translate of which has been sent to the Council, requesting to be permitted to hold the Zemindarry from the present year 1186 at the yearly Rent of Rs. 82,639.

'Disputes having arisen between me and Nazer Deo, concerning the right of certain villages in the Purgunnah Gayabaree, my Zemindarry, an Aumeen was sent by Mr. Harwood by whose report they clearly appeared to belong to my Zemindarry. The Purgunnah is now under Mr. Purling and the Amla of both parties attended that Gentleman with the papers and the villages are in charge of government till the matter is adjusted.

'According to the Hustabood of the Sezawal, the Jumma amounts to Rupees 6195-15½ annas. I therefore humbly request that an order may be issued to Mr. Purling to examine the papers and to put me in possession

of the villages. I further hope that the offer I made for the settlement of Barharbund which has been referred to the Board may be agreed to, the amount of which including the Jumma of the above villages, will be Rupees 88,833-15½ and that an Aumildarree Sunud may be granted me from the year 1186 and fixing them at the sum for ever.'

Mr. Purling, the Collector of Rungpore was questioned regarding the dispute between Lokenath Nandy and Nazir Deo, the Dewan of Coochbehar for Gayabarree. He said that the Zemindar of Baharbund laid a claim to some part of Gayabarree in August 1777, which was then under the physical possession of Nazir Deo. Harwood and Purling had investigated into the problem without being able to arrive at a decision.

Regarding the Zemindar's opinion and statement about collection, Purling said, they were correct. He himself had not seen the figures of 1185, so was not able to give his opinion. The Zemindar correctly stated that his share of Moshaira was neither deducted nor paid to him. The Secretary to the Board being questioned stated that the Zemindar's statement of 1185 figures are accurately stated. Purling was then asked to return to Rungpore and after careful consideration of all the papers answer the following question :—

1. Whether the Petition of the Zemindar of Baharbund to be allowed the possession of his Zemindarry at the fixed Jumma of Rs. 82,639 be granted ?
2. Whether the Zemindar shall be allowed his Moshaira out of that sum ?
3. Whether the Zemindar shall be allowed his Moshaira out of the collections of the last two years ?

As Philip Francis was absent from the Board all the relevant papers were sent to him.¹¹¹

In the meantime the Superintendent of the Khalsa Records reported that the 'Sunnud' in favour of 'Lucknaut Chowdhury' was ready. This 'Dewanny Sunnud for the Pargana of Baharbund etc. consisted of the following papers :—Furd Sewal—1 paper, Muchulka—1 paper, Huckikut—2 papers and Zaminy—1 paper. Prepared in conformity to the Board's Order of 30th July 1779.' The Council resolved, 'Agreed that

¹¹¹Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 30 July 1779, p. 151-159.

the Sunnud be executed and ordered that it be delivered by the Secretary to the Proprietor.'¹¹²

The minutes sent by Francis was recorded in the next meeting of the Council held on 20 August. He suggested that the net Jumma should be fixed of the Baharbund Pargana etc. at the medium of three years. The Jumma should come net to the Treasury without allowing any deductions for the Zemindar who should forego his Moshaira of the past two years as the collection did not exceed the total Jumma. Barwell recommended the settlement at the already agreed sum of Rs. 82,639. Wheler subscribed to the minute of Francis. Hastings had therefore no other alternative but to explain the circumstances elaborately, once again he was addressing, not the members of his Council, but the Court of Directors in London. "The person", he said, 'who is the object of them (resolutions) is my servant and he has been for that reason (or for none) this long deprived of a right which he acquired before I arrived in the Country or was appointed to any station in it. In the opinion which I may give on the question I am exposed to a disagreeable dilemma and must either subject myself to the imputation of partiality or while I yield to that suggestion and attend only to the delicacy which my own conduct may require. I must be unjust to a Man who has a claim to my support as a subject of this Government and has certainly not forfeited that right by being my immediate dependent.'

'The case of this man is widely different from that of the other Zemindars. As long as he could afford it, he supported his credit in a declining Pergunnah by paying up its defeciencies out of his private fortune. When he had no longer means for this annual expense, he yielded to the necessity and resigned the charge of it. It has since remained in the charge of the Government and the collections thus realised have fallen short of the medium of the collection of the years 1180, 1181 and 1182 by 27,074 Rupees or 13,537 Rupees annually. Mr. Purling has declared in the presence of the Board that he does not believe the Pergunnah to be capable of yielding a higher Jumma than 80,000 Rupees. The Zemindar has agreed to take charge of it at 82,639 Rupees. Trusting to his own care and attention for indemnifying himself for the actual difference with respect to his Moshaira, the Board has, it is true, passed a general resolution that every Zemindar refusing to rent his own Zemindarry shall

¹¹²Ibid., of 13 August 1779, p. 217.

forfeit his Moshaira, if by such refusal the actual rents shall not prove sufficient to complete the fixed Jumma and leave a surplus for that allowance. But I conceive the case of Zemindar of Baharbund to be widely different from that of the Zemindar intended by this order. He has been long out of possession and in effect never was allowed complete possession in all the forms'...

'For these reasons it is my opinion,...that the Zemindar is both entitled to his Moshaira...and to his arrears out of the collections.'

After such strong advocacy the case was won in favour of Kantababu. The Board passed the following resolution, 'Resolved that the Zemindar of Baharbund be allowed the possession of his Zemindarry on a Mocurrery or fixed lease at the Jumma of 82,639 Rupees being the amount of the collections of the last year.

'Ordered thereon that a Bundibusty Sunnud be prepared for him accordingly by the Superintendent of Khalsa Records'. Charles Purling the Rungpore Collector was given full instructions in the matter and was also directed to examine the dispute that had arisen in the Gayabari Pargana between Kantababu and Nazir Deo.¹¹³

The Secretary waited on Francis, who was indisposed, with the Proceedings of the last Council. Francis immediately minuted, 'I object to the grant of the Mocurrery Lease to the Zemindar of Baharbund, as a partial distinction which ensures to him the possession of this Zemindarry for his life upon a Jumma fixed by another rule equally partial. Dated 27 August 1779.'¹¹⁴

On 3rd September the Superintendent of the Khalsa Records laid before the Board the Bundibusty Sanad for the settlement of Baharbund. The translation of the Sanad :—

'Bundibusty Sunnud in favour of Lucknaut Nundy for the Perg, Baharbund etc.

To the Muttsuddes for affairs present and future, the Canongoes and Mokuddums of Pergunnah Baharbund etc., the Zemindarry of

¹¹³Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 20 August 1779, p. 2791-2799.

¹¹⁴Ibid., of 31 August 1779, p. 3003.

Lucknaut Nundy situated in Sircar Bengalbhoom in Chuckla Kurryburry, in the Paradise of countries, the Soubah of Bengal.

'Be it known that agreeable to the orders of the Governor General in Council the Purgunnahs aforesaid are settled as underneath according to the Receipts of Bengal years 1184 and 1185 when under immediate collection of the Officers of the Gentlemen at Rungpore, at the annual amount of 82,639 Sicca Rupees inclusive of everything and to remain fixed and permanent, the said person will therefore pay the above-mentioned Established Revenue regularly year by year, and it is required of you to consider these Purgunnahs as settled on a fixed and permanent footing and to receive from him the aforesaid established amount without exacting any other articles from or making any extra demands upon him and you shall not require a new Sunnud from him every year. Be strictly, attentive hereto.'

'Statement of Jumma

Total Amount	82639 Rs.
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Names of the Muhals

Pargunnah Baharbund in Sircar Bengalbhoom—one entire Muhal
 A Kismut of Perg. Betrebund in Sircar Bengalbhoom — 1 muhal
 A Kismut of Perg. Gayabarry in Sircar Deekmy — 1 muhal.

Particulars of the Jumma

Amount Receipts in the year	1184—Rs. 80525
Increase in the year	1185— „ 2114
	—————
	Rs. 82639

(translated by W. Chalmers, Persian translator)'

The Council Agreed that the Sanad be executed and delivered to Lucknaut Nundy.¹¹⁵

So it was after five years that the trouble regarding Baharbund abated and Lokenath received the *sunad* for which he applied in 1774. Apart from Hastings' vigorous support and the lukewarm opposition of

¹¹⁵Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 3 September 1779, p 3050-3053.

Francis one of the other factors which decided in Kantababu's favour was the bad collections made by the *Sezawal*. It cannot be considered to be a mere coincidence that Ducarel, the Superintendent of the Khalsa and Purling, the Collector of Rungpore were both friends of Kantababu since their posting in Cossimbazar and Murshidabad in 1769. The success of the endeavour once again lay in preparing the case carefully and handling the situation with efficiency. The tact, courage and patience with which Kantababu worked for five years ultimately crowned him with success, giving him the permanent right of his Zemindary at Baharbund long before the Permanent Settlement came into operation. On 20 October 1779 the *Sunnad* was formally signed by the members of the Council namely Hastings, Barwell, Francis, Wheler and Coote.¹¹⁶

In 1783 there was a sudden uprising of the cultivators in Baharbund. Hastings wrote to Goodlad, the Collector of Rungpur to offer all help to Kantababu. Company forces had to be deployed and the revolt was crushed. These letters from Hastings to Goodlad created misunderstanding amongst some later writers who not knowing the history of the time interpreted the event as a sign of great partiality that Hastings demonstrated towards Kantababu by allowing him to put down a revolt in the Zemindarry by using the Company's soldiers. On the other hand Manulla Mondol, a country poet who wrote his book between 1843 and 1844 used this event in his 'Kantanama' to create a hero out of Kantababu, who fought down the evils 'with canons and cavalry' establishing a peaceful and prosperous 'kingdom' in Baharbund.¹¹⁷

Hunter gives a fine account of those troubled times, quoting from Glazier's Report, 'Rangpur as a frontier District bordering on Nepal, Bhutan, Kuch Behar and Assam was peculiarly liable to be infested by bandits, who ravaged the country in armed bands numbering several hundreds. Bhitarbund and Swaruppur...offered great facilities for refuge' (p. 158). The influence of these bands of robbers fell on the local bad characters who joined them for money. The current problems also created discontent. 'In January 1783 the Rangpur cultivators suddenly rose in rebellion and drove out the Revenue Officers. They set forth their grievances in a statement submitted to the Collector of the

¹¹⁶W. W. Hunter. A Statistical account of Bengal (Rangpur), First Ed. Vol. VII (London 1876), p. 323.

¹¹⁷Nikhilnath Roy. Murshidabad Kahini, (First Ed. 1901, Calcutta) Article on Kantababu; and Manulla Mondol. Kantanama, (First Ed. 1913, Dacca) Ed. Nalinikanta Bhattasali.

District, who on hearing of the rising, had made an attempt to appease them. They complained of the levy of a tax known as 'darivilla', the nature of which does not clearly appear and also of the discount they had to pay for the exchange of local or Narayani rupees into Arcot Rupees in which their rental was payable. The Collector agreed to revert to the previous revenue demand and the cultivators expressed themselves satisfied and apparently dispersed. This concession however did not dispose of the question of the large balances which had accumulated and the malcontents soon again assembled in larger numbers than before. They forced the cultivators of Kuch Behar to join them and sent parties to Dinajpore to raise the people there. The insurgents committed several murders and issued a proclamation that they would pay no more revenue. One of the leaders assumed the title of Nawab and a tax called 'dingkarcha' or sedition tax was levied for the expenses of the insurrection.

'Matters now looked serious and active measures were taken to put down the rising. Forces of barkandazs were sent out in various directions and several encounters took place. In an attempt to burn Mughulhat, the self-styled Nawab's forces were defeated and the Nawab himself wounded and taken prisoner. A party of Sepoys under Lieutenant Macdonald marched to the North against the principal body of insurgents. A decisive engagement was fought near Patgram on the 22nd February 1783. The Sepoys disguised themselves by wearing white clothes over their uniform and by that means got close to the rebels who were utterly defeated; sixty were left dead on the field and many others were wounded and taken prisoner.

'Two Commissions sat to enquire this insurrection and it was not till February 1789, in the time of Lord Cornwallis that the final orders of Government were issued. The loss of the large outstanding balances fell principally, if not wholly, upon Raja Debi Singh, but, with the exception of the loss of his money, he escaped scot free. Har Ram, a native of Rangpur who had been the sub-farmer under Debi Singh, and whose oppressions had brought about the rising, was sentenced to imprisonment for one year and after its expiration to be banished from the Districts of Rangpur and Dinajpur. Five ring leaders of the insurgents were also banished.'¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸Hunter. Op. Cit., pp. 157-158.

As soon as the trouble subsided and in fact throughout the period of unrest Lokenath continued to improve his Zemindary. 'The Baharbund Zemindar was the only proprietor in Rangpur with large private fortune and he began at once that course of scientific administration which has rendered this Zemindari one of the best managed in the District. During 1189 and 1190 Bengal era (1782-83 and 1783-84), Lokenath carried out new measurement and assessment of his estate. This relieved the lesser ryots, at the expense of the more powerful ones, who had in various ways obtained possession of the best land at the lowest rates of rent, while the deficiency caused by these unfair practices had been made up by taxes which fell most heavily on the poorer ryots. The principal men went to Calcutta to complain of the new assessment and laid the matter before the Board of Revenue. The following decision of the Committee in the matter is interesting, as illustrating what were then considered as the position and rights of Zemindars. The Zemindar was not considered to have any right to change the ancient mode or rate of collecting the revenue. In spite of this adverse ruling the Baharbund Zemindar at the end made good his point and stuck to the changes instituted by him to relieve the lesser ryots from the adverse burden of taxation.'¹¹⁹

The effects of good administration bore fruit immediately. An attachment between the Zemindar and the cultivator and the lesser ryots was slowly created as a result of which the Zemindari of Baharbund was not at all disturbed when the rest of Rangpur, Dinajpore and Coochbehar were ravaged by the 'Robin Hood' type activities of Bhabani Pathak and his men aided by the female counterpart 'Debi-Chaudhurani', now made into a famous heroine by the novel of Bankim Chandra Chatterji of that title which has been successfully translated into the mass-media of theatre, cinema and radio-play several times over in the last hundred years. In 1787 Lieutenant Brenan surprised and killed Bhabani Pathak in an encounter while Debi-Chaudhurani was active till 1789.

The question of Nazir Deo's dispute about Gaibarree (later changed to Goalbarree) was not easily resolved. The Council read the Petition of the Zemindar of Baharbund on 1 July 1784. 'The Hon'ble Board were pleased sometime since to refer to the judge of the Adalaut of Rangpore, the renewal of an enquiry into a suit depending between me and Nuzer Deo of Cooch Behar and ordered me to attend to carry it on, which I

¹¹⁹Hunter, Op. Cit., p. 323.

accordingly did, but now that Mr. Goodlad has returned, Mr. Moore says he is not in possession of the reference. Wherefore I pray that you will be pleased to grant a proper order to Mr. Moore to proceed with the cause'. It was immediately ordered that the Judge of the Dewanny Adalaut at Rungpore be furnished with a copy of the Board's order on the subject.¹²⁰ A month later the report of P. Moore, Collector of Rungpore which had been written on the 9 June 1784 was placed in the Council. It placed on record the difficulties that Moore was having with Nazir Deo. He wrote, 'The Hon'ble Board should take such measures as to protect the infant Rajah of Coochbehar from the evil influence of Nazir Deo'. Moore referred to a petition by the Rani where she apprehends that the evil influence of Nazir Deo will harm the person and interest of her minor son. Nazir Deo and Dewan Deo are titles peculiar to the family. Nazir Deo is the Commander of the forces while Dewan Deo is the Naib of the Raja. 'The office of Nazir Deo is now held by Hogindrenarain Cooer, conferred on him by the late Rajah. On the demise of Rudroonarain, the son of Obheynarain, the Nazir Deo has usurped all power and the Rani rightly wanted to overthrow him and in his place appoint Sobhanund Gossain Gooroo and Cossinaut Leuree both trusted servants of her late husband Dhurjendernarrain.¹²¹ Thus for self-preservation Kantababu got involved in the Cooch Behar politics of the time. It became a supreme battle of wits behind the screen. Except for the different signs of success there is almost nothing to describe this interesting struggle.

Nazir Deo was ultimately discharged from the employment of the Coochbehar Rajas. Kantababu obtained the possession of Gaibaree. Nazir Deo joined the Deb Raja of Bhutan and on 25 February, 1787 made a complaint against Kantababu. 'The Deb Raja of Bhutan says that Bhalla Kayath being his old servant was granted the village of Bhutahat but during the war with the English, Kanta Babu took possession of the village. When peace was re-established Bhalla filed a suit against Kantu and obtained a decree against him from Mr. Bogle (Collector of Rungpur). When Mr. Moore (Member of the Committee of Revenue at Calcutta) took charge of the District, Kantu in turn brought an action against Bhalla and it was decreed that the possession of the village be made over to him.' The Deb Raja forwarded the decrees and requested that the village may be granted to one whose claim is

¹²⁰Revenue Department Proceedings of 1 July 1784, p. 1920-1921.

¹²¹Ibid., of 10 August 1784, p. 275-293.

established by law. The letter also inevitably needles the Coochbehar Raja. 'Further solicits that Mr. McDowall may be directed to enforce payment with interest of a bond for Rs. 7518-8 executed by the Raja of Cooch Behar fourteen years ago on account of different commodities supplied by him to the Raja of Cooch Behar.'¹²²

Nothing further however is heard of these events. Baharbund Pargana came up before the English Parliament during the Impeachment Proceedings of Warren Hastings. In fact this was the only property of Kantababu that was particularised in the Impeachment of Hastings. On 7 May 1788, Burke laid before this audience that Hastings had given this lucrative property to his Banian after robbing a widow who was an old lady of the first rank and family in India, that this was one of the vilest deeds perpetuated by Hastings during his stay in India.¹²³ Baharbund also figured prominently in the 9th Report of the Select Committee where extracts from Bengal Consultations of 21 March, 25 March and 11 April of 1775 were reported.¹²⁴ Major John Scott defending Hastings in the House of Commons said on 19 April 1787, 'Mr. Hastings did not give the Zemindari to Cantoo Baboo; he merely passed the Sunnud through the public office to complete a grant, which the man possessed before his return to India.'¹²⁴

With the advent of the Permanent Settlement, Baharbund Pargana no longer remained an island in the settlement records, but became a part of the permanent pattern that was being promulgated throughout the country. Baharbund was the sheet anchor of the fortune of Kantababu's family and subsequent history will show the importance in which the family held this Pargana. The revenue remaining static the income of the property was vastly increased by investment in land and intelligent settlement so that the ultimate profit became greater. The fertile land served by two rivers and an enterprising industrious Zemindar soon received the benefit of his labours and even before the death of Kantababu the Baharbund income was steady at more than a lakh of rupees. It was 14½ lakhs of Rupees in 1947.

¹²²Calendar of Persian Records. Vol. VII (1785-1787), p. 318 (OR 103; AR4, p. 379. No. 66).

¹²³Edmund Burke. The Writings and Speeches (Huntingdon Ed. Colonial Press. U.S.A.), Vol. X, p. 128-131.

¹²⁴(a) Reports from the Committees of the House of Commons (Reprinted by the order of the House) Vol. VI. East Indies 1783 (Pub. 1806). The 9th Report of the Select Committee. Appendix 35B, p. 194-200.

(b) Parliamentary Register. Vol. XXII, p. 112-113.

Smaller Properties :

Apart from the Farms of Kantababu, disputes and complaints were made in regard to many of the smaller properties or Mahals that were held by him. The petitions came to the Council and sometimes reached a settlement there. These properties will now be treated briefly. It will be clear from the chronological evaluation that in 1773-74, Kantababu was still in the offensive, undoubtedly flushed by the important position he was holding; later he assumes a defensive role and only acquires further properties after the departure of Hastings in 1785.

1. Issoufpore, 1773. The Farmers of Issoufpore and Sydepore were Ramgovinda and Bholanath. Their accounts which were laid before the Board showed that Rs. 4335 had been paid to 'Canto Baboo' for the repayment of a debt. The Board resolved that it was a private mercantile transaction for which the Committee of Revenue is not answerable.¹²⁵

2. Sultanpore Currerea, 1774. The Committee of Revenue made a reference to the Board after receiving an application from Lokenath Nandy who claimed that Cossinaut Dutt, the farmer of Sultanpore Currerea owed him the sum of Rs. 5484-15-6 as the outstanding of a debt contracted in 1769. Now as the value paid by the new farmer amounting to Rs. 15288-14-9 was stated to be utilised to discharge the balances of Revenue of the late Zemindar, the Committee was at a loss and forwarded the matter to the Board.¹²⁶ It is not known how the problem was ultimately resolved.

3. Santosh and Beergong, 1775. 'Nund Comer Sircar' took the farm of the two Parganas mentioned above. But as the Dinajpore Council was not sure that he would pay the revenue in time, he was asked to furnish additional security. Nandakumar Sircar emphatically argued that he was quite capable to comply with the terms of his agreement. He however offered Narsing Baboo as his additional security.¹²⁷ Such a security was most gladly accepted by the Revenue Department. It was not a big farm and total of the balance of three years amounted only to the sum of Rs. 4885. It is not known under what terms Narsing Baboo agreed to be the security of the Farmer.

¹²⁵Proceedings of the Superintendent of Khalsa Records of 5 July 1773, p. 227-228.

¹²⁶Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 13 June 1774, p. 57-58.

¹²⁷Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 25 April and 18 July 1775, p. 1737-1738 & 197-210.

4. The 9/16th Division of Tumlook, 1776. When the five years settlement was made Meer Zeinul Abdeen became the Renter or Farmer of the 9/16th Division of Tumlock, Lokenath Nandy executed deeds as his security or Mahlzamin. Ranny Krisnapriya, the Zemindar, immediately afterwards took the farm of her own lands in Katkinna (as under farmer) from Meer Zeinul Abdeen in the name of Bhabananda Das and gave Kandarpa Das as Colezamin or Counter Security.

In the year 1774 a very considerable balance had arisen upon this Farm and then the Committee, as it appears in their Proceedings of 15 April, ordered the Renter, Meer Zeinul Abdeen and the ostensible under-renter Bhabananda Das into confinement. No notice was issued to Lokenath, the Governing Security. Kandarpa Das then came forward to pay the Revenue provided the district was settled under his management. The head-Farmer Meer Zeinul Abdeen declared himself ready to pay the Revenue with another Security who would also pay the arrears and be responsible to the Government.

The question that arose was whether Lokenath could thus quietly retire from his responsibilities and whether Kantababu was responsible for the payment. Serious altercations took place between the Governor General and General Clavering, the latter holding that 'Cantoo' was solely responsible for the payment, while Hastings' argument was that as soon as Kandarpa Das became the security, Lokenath's responsibility ceased because of displacement. Ultimately the Calcutta Committee was asked to report whether Zeinul Abdeen and Lokenath Nandy had received any Izaradaree allowance out of this Farm.¹²⁸

The report of the Calcutta Committee was inconclusive. They did not at all try to answer the questions raised in the Council but gave their general remark about the province, making everybody connected with it responsible for the bad management. They repeated the report that all the persons named with the running of the province had drawn allowances, but they were unable to say what was the exact amount drawn by each of them and at what time. As the expense account was generally drawn, they were not in a position to prove if any one of the persons or more did not receive any money at all. To crown the report with utter ambiguity, they reported that they were utterly ignorant about

¹²⁸Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 23 July 1776, p. 2402-2406, 2430-2435.

the amount drawn as allowance under the heads of Russom and Batta. They however suggested that the future Bundobust (settlement) should be drawn up in a formal manner so that the Zemindar does not act as he pleases and a Sezawal or Government Collector be appointed for the collection of money and salt, as the Revenue was dependent on the payment of both the items.¹²⁹

5. Habaspur, 1779. Lokenath started getting involved in many smaller mahals. He became the Talookdar of Habaspur. Now there arose a dispute between the riots of Habaspur and the Pargana of Soojanagore regarding their respective boundaries. Lokenath dutifully reported that the riots cultivated their lands according to the demarcations made by the Amin but Anil Biswas, the Naib of Pargana Soojanagore in conjunction with a great number of his tenants forcibly got hold of the lands of the Saha Mirpore riots and oppressed them by cutting and taking away their paddy harvest; whereupon Lokenath complained. While he was preparing to lay the matter before the Council, the Vakeel of the Zemindar of Mahomedshahi promised to settle the matter amicably and thus prevailed upon him not to proceed with the complaint.

Even after a considerable lapse of time the Vakeel did not take any action. Lokenath's Gomastah, accompanied by the riots, waited upon Anil Biswas for several days but he maliciously neglected to meet them.

During the year under review, 1185 B.S., Anil Biswas once again in the month of Aghran, seized the harvest of Habaspur and put pykes to watch over the land, being aided by the gomastah to the Zemindar of Mahomedshahi. Lokenath appealed to the Calcutta Committee of Revenue for redress, requesting that the Committee may examine the papers of the riots along with the settlement made by the former Amin and put them in possession of the lands justly belonging to them. He also requested that the paddy harvest that had been forcibly taken away should be made good to the riots by the oppressors.¹³⁰

6. Sootanooty, 1781. It is interesting to find Kantababu among those who defaulted their Chowkidarry taxes for their properties in Sootanooty.

¹²⁹Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 28 October 1776, p. 531

¹³⁰Ibid., 24 February 1779, p. 495-498.

In fact the catalogue of the names serve as an index of the important citizens who lived in the area. The names of many appear repeatedly year after year, while Kantababu's name appeared only once in 1781. Kantababu had the reputation of making all payments in time. Even in his speech in the House of Commons, Major John Scott emphasised on 19 April 1787, '...that it was remarkable that this man (Kantababu) has paid up every rupee of his balances.'¹³¹ It may therefore be remarked conclusively that the default in the Chowkidarry demand payment, was merely an inadvertance. As this short order is extremely informative it is quoted below :—

"By order of Governor General in Council (Present Hon'ble Warren Hastings and Edward Wheler) I have in their name made a written demand of Chokedarry from the principal inhabitants of Sootanootty and Baug Bazar, several have complied with the demand, enclosed a list of those who have not, which you will be pleased to lay before the Board.

Calcutta 3rd February 1781

Signed J. Evelyn.

"The List.

Sootanootty : Rajah Nobkissen, Kisnacaunt Baboo, Gunga Govind Sing, Rajah Ramlochan, Chundersekar Holder, Kisnochurn Metre, Durgaram Missery, Radhakisna Sircar, Luckyaunt Dhur, Tullciram Bose, Hurry Krisno Takoor, Kisnochurn Bose, Durgachurn Chuckerbutty and Niahn(?) Soor.

Calcutta: Bindabund Bysack, Bastumchurn Bose, Rasebeary Seat, Ramneedy Takoor, Gocul Kishore Seat, Goculchunder Metre.

Baug Bazar : Durgachurn Mukherjee and Ramkishore Holder."¹³²

Almost all the important citizens are found in this list. In each section the names were written in accordance to the honour enjoyed by that person in the society. Kantababu, the only 'Baboo', is placed after Raja Nabakrisna but before Gungagovinda Singh. It may not be wrong therefore to presume that the position that Kantababu held in the city was only second to Maharaja Nabakrisna.

7. Balliapur, 1788. The importance of this transaction is that it is the first property about which a dispute arose after the departure

¹³¹Parliamentary Register xxii, p. 112-113.

¹³²IOR. Bengal Revenue Consultations of 30 March 1781, p. 373-374.

of Hastings from India. The Impeachment had already started. His friends in India were busy collecting testimonials for him. This was a very successful operation as from Nawab Mobarukuddowlah, the Subadar of Bengal to the Maulavis and Pundits, everybody paid glowing tributes to Hastings. The priests of the different famous deities of so many places sent him the blessings of their Lord, many composing small Sanskrit verses. Even Rani Bhawani and Raja Ramkrishna who were said to have been hurt by some actions of Hastings sent out wonderful testimonials as did the citizens of Calcutta. All these testimonials in original were sent to England and incorporated as the appendix to the Debates of the House of Lords on the evidence delivered in the trial of Warren Hastings.¹³³

The atmosphere in 1788 therefore was not at all congenial to Kantababu who stood the chance of being oppressed, if the Impeachment found its mark. The incident under review is the only clear evidence that if Hastings could have been proved guilty, the smear would have spread on Kantababu. The area concerned turned out to be of great importance only in the twentieth century as it covered three fourths of what came to be known as the Ranigang Coal field. The Balliapur affair is also an example of the rule of law that was established by the English East India Company in this country, which prevented any man being unnecessarily harassed. In spite of the low-standing of Hastings in 1788, Kantababu received a fair hearing and was able to prove that the statement prepared against him was utterly false. The facts of the case explained in the Sanad held by him was quite different from the facts put forward by the complainant.

In 1788 Kantababu in the name of his son Lokenath had been enjoying the property of Balliapur for over 20 years. In 1180 (1773-74) he received a Sanad from the Raja of Pacheat which gave Lokenath the hereditary permanent right of Balliapur and 26 other villages. Now on 23 July 1788 the Raja of Pacheat or Panchakote complained that in April 1767 corresponding to 1 Baisakh 1174, Kantababu as the Muttsuddy (Banian) of Mr. Sykes, influenced Jagatchand and by false representation procured from him the possession of the Province. The Pacheat Raja

¹³³Debates of the House of Lords on the evidence delivered in the Trial of Warren Hastings, Esquire. Testimonials of the British and Native Inhabitants of India, relative to his character and conduct, whilst he was Governor General of Fort William, in Bengal. (1797 London), p. 517-826.

(The Appendix is extremely useful for assessing the social condition of the time. If carefully read many misconceptions created by careless writers will be corrected.)

wanted to say that Jagatchand was not authorised by him in 1174 and in 1180 when he himself granted the Sanad to Kantababu for permanent hereditary occupation, he had to do so out of fear and helplessness, as Kantababu was then the Dewan to the Governor General. His prayer was to get back his property which Kantababu was ruining by oppression.

The whole matter was referred to G. C. Meyer of the Khalsa Department who gave the following report to John Shore, President, Board of Revenue on 6 June 1788, 'Having called on Kanto Baboo for the title deeds by which he holds the Talook of Beleahpore agreeably to your order of the 11 March last, I now do myself the honour of laying before you an attested copy and translation of the Sunnud and Deed of Conveyance which he has produced in consequence.'

The translation of the Sunnud under the Company's seal for the villages of Balliapur etc. was attached. 'To the officers of the Government for the time being and to come, the Zemindars, Canoongoes, Raiyets and inhabitants of the village Balliapore in the Purgunnah of Sheirgurb in the Sarkar of Mundarin dependent on the Chucklah of Burdwan in the Province of Bengal, the Paradise of Regions; be it known, that in compliance with a Memorial counter-signed by the most puissant and illustrious Nazim Seifoddowla Seyyid Nejabat Ali Khan Bahadur, Shehamut Jung and agreeably to which the official Report and Penal Obligations have been signed, as hereon endorsed the Talookdarry of the above villages have been granted to Lokenaut from the beginning of 1175 (Bengal Style) subject to the payment of 301 Rupees to the Government Peshcash, to the end that he discharge the duties and functions thereof with zeal and fidelity and do not neglect or be deficient in the most minute point of vigilance and attention ; And that conducting himself with propriety towards the Ryots and inhabitants in general.

' He be careful to maintain the said villages in a state of cultivation and study to increase the Revenues by the encouragement of agriculture and the advancement of population throughout the aforesaid villages. That he gives no protection to thieves or robbers within his limits and that he takes such special care of the high Roads, that the passenger and travellers may pass and repass in confidence and Security. And if (which God forbid) the Property of any person should be stolen or plundered, he shall produce the offenders together with the Property, and having

restored the latter to the true owner, shall bring the offender to condign Punishment and in case he fail to produce the same, he shall answer for the Property so stolen or plundered. That he take particular precautions that no one be guilty of drunkenness or other irregularities and that he be careful to pay the Revenues of Government in due time and season. That he further deliver in, the necessary papers yearly to the officers of the Government agreeably to Custom and refrain from collecting the Taxes abolished by the Imperial Court. It is therefore requisite that knowing the above person to be the lawful Talookdar of the aforesaid Province and villages, you consider the duties and functions of that station as appertaining to him. Regard this a Positive.

Given on the 17th of Jemadeossary in the 10th year of his Majesty's Reign.'

'The Particulars of the Fird Sawal or Memorial.

Lokenath Chowdry of part of the Pergunnah of Jehangeerpur etc., has purchased the villages of Balliapur in the Purgunnah of Sheirgarh in the Sirkar of Mindarun, dependent on the Chucklah of Burdwan in the Soubah of Bengal, Paradise of Regions, of Juggut Chund the Zemindar and has the Deed of conveyance in his possession and represents that without the Grant of a Sunnud, the Ryots are not satisfied, he therefore hopes on the condition of paying 301 Rupees Peishcash etc. to the Government, he may be honoured with a Sunnad for the Talookdary of the above villages'.

Form of the Sign Manual :—

'Let a Sunnud be granted. 26 villages and 1 Kismat or Division. Total 27 villages, the Jumma whereof agreeably to the statement signed by the Canongoes of the Province is as follows :

1. Balliapore	—	Having a Jumma of Rs.	83
2. Village Majheara	—	" " " " "	77
3. " Gangoteah	—	" " " " "	133
4. " Bolkoondeh	—	" " " " "	47
5. " Nischiuntah	—	" " " " "	34
6. " Berterea	—	" " " " "	17
7. " Sreerampur	—	" " " " "	5
8. " Barbekpur	—	" " " " "	14
9. " Pautmohanah	—	" " " " "	12
10. " Kallooah	—	" " " " "	55

11.	„	Govindpur	—	„	„	„	„	„	14
12.	„	Deehecka	—	„	„	„	„	„	43
13.	„	Daumrah	—	„	„	„	„	„	43
14.	„	Champyee	—	„	„	„	„	„	19
15.	„	Bhannora	—	„	„	„	„	„	53
16.	„	Panee Phuleeah	—	„	„	„	„	„	18
17.	„	Barraboony	—	„	„	„	„	„	34
18.	„	Nawpara	—	„	„	„	„	„	15
19.	„	Chichurah	—	„	„	„	„	„	18
20.	„	Pattaul	—	„	„	„	„	„	25
21.	„	Luchmenpore	—	„	„	„	„	„	18
22.	„	Bangooneah	—	„	„	„	„	„	21
23.	„	Bhalsudadeah	—	„	„	„	„	„	6
24.	„	Akhooreah	—	„	„	„	„	„	111
25.	„	Dhanmoneah	—	„	„	„	„	„	51
26.	Mouza Jenardenpore and Sayer			„	„	„	„	„	8
27.	Kismat or the Division of Poonea of 12 as.			„	„	„	„	„	27

Total Jumma Rs. 1,001'

Along with these papers the Mochulka of Lokenath Nandy and the deed of conveyance of Raja Jagatchand was also submitted. The official report merely confirmed the findings. After considering all the papers the Council ordered to John Shore on 23 July 1788, 'Lokenaut Nundee must be considered as the Talookdar of Ballia etc. till his title to it shall be found invalid upon a regular judicial enquiry. You will in the meantime call upon him to know by what authority he holds the Talook upon its present Jumma and to show cause why a rent should not be demanded from him adequate to the actual produce and transmit your reply for our consideration.'¹³⁴

The memorial of Lokenath was read on 22 December 1788.

'I have been honoured by the receipt of your Commands under date 7th August 1788...The case in this Talook (Pachete) in question is not in fact held by the Tucseeme Tenure but by that denominated Naal-bundi or a fixed tenure. The Revenue of it in the time of the former

¹³⁴I.O.R. Bengal Revenue Consultations. Range 51 Vol. 22 (Proceedings of Bengal. Revenue Council) of 23 July 1788, p. 167-189

Zemindar amounted to one thousand and one Rupees accordingly when I purchased it that sum was expressly declared in the bill of sale to constitute the Jumma Naalbundi or Fixed Rent, nor does the word Tucseeme occur in any Dewanny Sunnud; the expression used in which is Mocurrarah Jumma importing the same as Tush-Kheesi or fixed.

‘The above sum was therefore separated from the Rental of the Pargana and conceiving it incumbent for me to discharge this sum, I concluded the settlement accordingly, though owing to the impoverished state of the Country, the produce at that time was not equal to the Rent of the Government. By considerable expense I had brought it into cultivation and thereby provided the means of paying the Public Revenue, when the Zemindar and the Farmer complained in 1179 that the produce amounted to ten thousand Rupees and requested that a proportionate deduction might be granted in their Rental in consequence of which Mr. Sumner, then Collector of Birbhum was directed to make a Hustobood or valuation of it. ...In conformity thereto the Revenue of the Government was again fixed at one thousand and one Rupees after allowing for incidental charges of collection and the Representation of the Zemindar and Farmer was proved to be groundless. The accounts of this valuation are still in the public Records and will corroborate with what I have advanced. Afterwards the Zemindar plundered and laid waste the whole Country in so much that no means were left in raising the Revenue, notwithstanding which, I did not apply for any remission but continued to discharge the Revenue, though I made repeated complaints that I could recover nothing from the Zemindar....

‘The Gentlemen are doubtless aware that both the Profit and Loss rest with the Talookdar. If indeed the latter (namely) Talookdar pleading the effect of any calamity should apply for a remission and keep the Revenue in arrears, the Government then will scrutinise his resources, but so long as he attends and discharges the Revenue agreeable to his Title Deeds, the Government do not according to the usage and custom of the Country call in question either the ability or inability of Taalluks acquired by Purchase and brought into cultivation by the purchaser upon the representation of any person whatever’. Lokenath further represented that it was customary that people make quick profit in the Taluks but because of its peculiar nature this Taluk has not been able to recover the money forwarded for the improvement of these places.

The Council considering all the facts agreed to continue the existing arrangement and the complaint from the Zemindar was dropped.¹³⁵ The rule of law has been undoubtedly established in the country though the tenure of permanent settlement later known as 'Mourasi Muccarari' was yet to come. The dealing of the complaint of the Pachete Zemindar seems extremely fair particularly because Kantababu was not a favourite of Lord Cornwallis, the Governor General, who had only a year ago turned down his petition for remission of rent temporarily when Jalalpure Nowpara was flooded. It was said that the Government was not prepared to grant any favour as Krisna Kanta Nandy owned vast property and was able to bear any loss arising out of a temporary calamity in a part of the property owned by him.¹³⁶ While dealing out Justice, prejudice was not allowed to interfere in any manner.

8. Bhowanigunge in Deehee Meherpur, 1791. This was one of the last controversies during the lifetime of Kantababu. Both in range and pattern this was the new type of dispute that arose after the Permanent Settlement was promulgated. According to this settlement, failure to pay Revenue in time resulted in the loss of ownership. The new proprietor after purchasing the property in the Revenue Sale immediately took possession of everything, resulting in great discomfort and loss of the previous owner.

The facts of this case were that Lokenath Nandy had purchased in Revenue Sale Deehee Meherpur which was in the Nadia District and had been a property of Rani Bhawani of Nator. Now in Meherpur the Rani had established the Haut of Bhowanigunge which also in due course became the property of the purchaser. The Rani disputed the right of the purchaser and claimed ownership to the Haut. The matter was further complicated by the fact that the village of Bhowanigunge was granted by the Rani to no less a person than Nawab Mobarak-ud-dowlah, the Subahdar of Bengal, who claimed his right to the grant, even after the main property was purchased by some one else in the Revenue Sale. As the complications could not be resolved at a lower level, Thomas Graham, President, Board of Revenue was asked to submit a report, which he did on 7 October, 1791 to Lord Cornwallis.

¹³⁵I.O.R. Bengal Revenue Consultations, Proceedings of the Revenue Council of 22 December 1788, p. 448-452.

¹³⁶N. K. Sinha, *Economic History of Bengal* (Calcutta 1962) Vol. II, p. 123.

‘We have the honour to submit extracts of our proceedings on a claim made by Lokenut Nundee, the Purchaser of Dhee Meherpur etc. for a deduction amount of Haut Bhowannygunge stated by him to be included in the Deebundy but in the possession of the Nawab.

2. It appears that the Jumma of Bhowannygunge was included in the Deebundy of the lands purchased by Lokenut Nundee at the Khalsa and that he has paid the Revenue thereof from the time of his purchase until the abolition of the Sayer notwithstanding the possessions and collections have been in the hands of the Nawab. We beg to recommend that the amount thereof be repaid to him and that the Collector of Nuddea be authorised to disburse the same accordingly.

3. Lokenut Nundee’s request to be repaid the proportion of the purchase money paid by him at the Khalsa with interest thereon, appearing to us just, we further beg leave to recommend that the Preparer of Reports be directed to ascertain the amount which he will be entitled to on this account and that the Collector of Nuddea be authorised to pay the same to the Purchaser; and that the Commissioner of Rajeshyee be instructed to recover the amount from the Zemindar of that District, the proceeds arising from the sale having been carried to his credit in liquidating of the Balances due from him to Government.

4. We also beg leave to recommend that the Grant of Bhowannygunge made by the Ranny to the Nabob, be investigated by the Collector of Murshidabad under the existing regulations and that he be directed to submit his proceedings therein for the ultimate decision of your Lordship in Council’.

Accordingly the Collectors of Nadia, Murshidabad and Rajshahi were written to. The Murshidabad Collectorate was asked whether the Nawab had made any claim on the ‘Hat’ (market) of Bhowanigunge. The Rajshahi Collector was asked to ascertain whether it was true that the Zemindar of Rajshahi admits that the ‘Hat’ is the property of the Nawab and was erroneously included in the Deebundy of lands sold in discharge of the balances due from the Rani to the Government. The Nadia Collector, in whose jurisdiction the disputed market was situated was asked to find out who was collecting the rent of the market and whether there was any dispute about it. This factor of physical possession

of the market was necessary to decide the ultimate ownership of the market.

The extracts from the petition made by Lokenath Nandy's vakeel will clarify his point of view. 'Bhowannygunge Haut on Dhee Rajepur under Dhee Meerpur has been in the possession of the Nawab ever since the purchase at auction by my constituent according to orders in paying the Revenue of it. It was ordered after an enquiry that my constituent should obtain possession according to the Deebundy. The Sayer is now altogether abolished, I am therefore hopeful that the sum of 1616 Rupees 13 annas and a half paid from the beginning of the year 1194 till the year 1197 by my constituent at the yearly rate of 404 Rupees 3 annas 17½ gundas as likewise the amount of the purchase at outcry of this division, with the interest thereon, may be returned to my constituent and that it may in the future be deducted from the amount of the Settlement.'

The reports sent by the different Collectors were also considered. The Collector of Rajshahi, Tellman Henckell wrote from Natore on the 14 June 1791. He reported that though in the year 1186 the Nawab Mubarak-ud-dowlah laid claim and took possession of Ramnagar (in Nadia) in the Purgunnah of Rajepur on a plea that the land was situated, appertained to the Rumnah and in the same year established a Haut calling it Bowannygunge, the investigation of Mr. Evelyn in 1189 clearly proved that the land was not within the Rumnah as was claimed by the Nawab. Moreover it was included in the Malguzaree of the Purgunnah Rajepur and belonged to the Zemindar of Rajshahi till 1192. The Nawab made a second appeal this time to Mr. Dalls (Dallas?) but the result of the investigation did not alter the previous findings. The Rance of Rajshahi, however, to please the Nawab granted him a Sunnud of Ten Bighas of Laukraj land (rent free land) in Mouza Ramnagar. 'The Haut of Bhowannygunge included in the Malguzarry of Purgunnah Rajepur was sold by the Rance for the payments of the Balance due to the Government and is situated within the Dheebundy of Lokenaut Nundee's Talook, to which the Nawab has no title whatsoever', was the finding of the Collector of Rajshahi. So the title of Lokenath was established. After a thorough survey of the area William Redfearn, the Collector of Nadia reported that 7 Bighas of the land on which the Haut of Bhowanigunge was situated and claimed by the Nawab was not physically situated in Dhee Rajepur and was not therefore included in

the Talook of Lokenath Nandy as it fell in Dhee Pearpore. Redfearn had also contacted Lokenath himself over the problem personally. He was therefore able to conclude the question to the satisfaction of all the parties concerned. He reported that Lokenath Nandy was not interested in the few Bighas of land and so he did not lay any claim to the ground of the Haut but he was very much interested in having a deduction on the total Revenue, for the Sayer collection at the Bhowanigunge Haut, which was included in his Dheebundy.

Lokenath received the remission, the Nawab kept the Haut and the Rannee did not have to incur any loss by her actions. Such a situation had rarely been achieved before.¹³⁷

Among the new Zemindars of the Permanent Settlement, Lokenath was one of the most prosperous. He looked after the Settlement of land himself, met the Ryots and soon achieved the fame of being a very considerate and efficient Zemindar. The incident of the several Talooks culminating in the crisis of the Haut of Bhowanigunge and its easy solution demonstrates the passing of the management of affairs from Kantababu to Lokenath. Lokenath though practical was easy going. It is difficult to contemplate Kantababu letting the Haut go without a tough fight. It is obvious therefore that Kantababu now about 71 years in age was retiring from active life while Lokenath now a young man of 27, was taking over, with the help and advice of his very efficient cousin Baisnabcharan who was now a mature man of 47*. The concentration on Nadia and acquiring Zemindaries there through revenue sale was one of the favourite projects of Lokenath, who ran his Zemindari like a business or trade as it will be seen later. The affairs of the eight Talooks are mere landmarks in the progress of Kantababu into a position of stability.

The Permanent Settlement.

Hastings left India in 1785. Though he was not the perpetuator of the Permanent Settlement he had allowed many settlements permanently in the terms of the old Mughal rules of settlement. For example he approved the grant of Babarbund Pargana as the '*Jaaluh*' or perpetual and hereditary farm to Lokenath Nandy. Similarly in 1781 which was

¹³⁷IOR. Bengal Revenue Consultations, Proceedings of the Revenue Council of 7 October 1791, p. 166-187.

* Kantababu born C. 1720, Baisnabcharan 1744 and Lokenath 1764.

recorded on the 10 January 1785 he bestowed upon his Banian a Jageer estate. The grant was an '*Altumgha inam*' or a perpetual and hereditary donation which Kantababu on 1 May 1793 transferred to a Registered Religious Trust. By this grant Kantababu and his descendents received the Revenue of the Pargana of Khureed amounting to Rs. 10,000 per annum.

The Permanent Settlement came into effect from 10 August 1789. It was a bill of right given to people who were already holding certain properties. The settlement did not come with a fan fare or declaration of rights. The settlement did not ask people to come forward and enjoy a fresh and new status. It was only an official declaration granted to those who were already holding certain lands in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The Farmers had the choice of relinquishing those properties they considered to be unprofitable. The rules of the game were simple. If anybody failed to deposit the Revenue that was from time to time fixed by the Government his property was put up for sale and sold to the highest bidder, who not only had to pay the value of purchase but also had to deposit the defaulted rent. The new Purchaser became the owner of that property and as long as he paid the Revenue in time, he held the property permanently. The name of the Purchaser was substituted in the Register of the Government and the sale document coupled with the revised 'D' Register became his title deed to that property. The Zaamindar or guarantors of the Revenue for land thus became Zemindars or land holders, who earned profit by the fresh settlement of land to under-farmers and ryots. The formal proclamation was however announced on 22 March, 1793.

It is therefore natural to find that the better run Zemindaries thrived while the badly run Zemindaries suffered. Lokenath Nandy was able to increase his properties while Rani Bhawani continuously lost them.

Scholars have dealt with the Permanent Settlement extensively; so it is not necessary to go into it again. What is important to note here is that the system was not a new innovation by the English, organised in the shadow of the Magna Carta, as has been erroneously described by those who did not examine the historical background which brought the system into operation. The researches that the Company Officers undertook in 1787, 1788 and 1789 clearly demonstrate the reason for

promulgating the Permanent Settlement. Words like the *Mahl-Zaamin** meaning security for a province, can be contrasted with *Istemerardar* meaning the holder of a grant to perpetuity. But even an *Istemerardar* did not hold the absolute right to land in spite of the fact that an *Istemerrary Pottah* was a lease in perpetuity. Only the *Jaghire* or *Jagir* or *Jaigir* was a permanent right on the produce of the land which was given personally during the life time of the grantee. *Katkenadar* or *Kutkenadar* was an under farmer or tenant or a renter always under somebody. *Mocurrery* rights when applied to land was merely a lease on fixed terms, the person who held such a lease was known as *Mocurrarydar*. Similarly *Moothadar* was a person who had the lease of the *Mootha* or a small district.

The Mughal system did not give any permanent right of any kind to the common man as the King or Badshah was considered the heir of every person and the owner of all the land. Thus as soon as the person having any right died, his property vested in the Emperor and it was his sweet will if he granted them to the descendents of the deceased. All this leaves strong doubt that the *Zemindary* of the Mughal system should be read *Zaamindary* meaning the Security for the land.

The English Company also undertook some research in the matter and arrived at the conclusion that in the Hindu period which preceded the Mughal rule small principalities were held by leaders known as the *Raja* who were fully responsible for the area of land which he held. In fact recent researches have established that early Vedic societies after migrating to India and establishing agricultural habitations in fixed principalities chose a leader who was vested with the power to rule that society. This leader was known as *Raja* derived from the word '*ranjan*' meaning one who pleases. After a few centuries the original derivations were lost and the conqueror called himself *Raja* and if he was greater, *Maharaja* or even *Maharajadhiraja Adhiraj*. When they were not satisfied to be 'the beloved of men' they extended their introduction to '*Debanampriya*', beloved of the Gods, which in due course became '*Deba-putra*', son of the God and then '*Deba-raja*', the 'God-king'. The circumambulation was complete.

* I have used two 'a's instead of one to clarify the difference between *Zaamin* meaning Security with *Zemin* meaning land. Though one 'a' is considered correct and sufficient phonetically and for grammar.

All this was done by the ruler to impress upon the people that he ruled not only with his undeniable right to the land which was considered permanent and everlasting, but also with his divine right to the produce of that land. The king however graciously allowed his people to enjoy the produce of the land if they agreed to give him a part of the production which was of different ratio with different kings in different periods, and also paid a rent for the land and property they enjoyed. Thus the basic idea of the land and produce belonging to the king really started in the Hindu times with the difference that the King of the small principalities was the owner of his land. At the time of Ashok or even Harsha or other conquerors the number of the small independent land-holding Rajas fell, but with the collapse of the larger empires they multiplied quickly. The very practical political-theorist Kautilya in his *Arthashastra* has therefore laid down the political concept suitable to such small city-states and not to empires. The treaties on the division of land and the business of the collecting of Revenue, both in the Second Book clearly establishes the importance of these subjects.

There can be little doubt that though the English Company did not have any access to the modern research work or the writings of Kautilya who was then not even known to have existed, independently reached the conclusion that in Hindu India lands were held permanently. The evidence of the Revenue Department Proceedings are quite conclusive. On 2 April 1788 the record runs as follows : 'The Sovereign Ruler throughout Hindostan is the sole virtual Proprietor of the Soil in right and fact—the real acting Landlord'. (p. 243 Vol. 127). Discussing the problem in an extensive note, the proceeding notes in Para 30, 'In Akbar's time the Zemindars* of Bengal were numerous, rich and powerful, they were not of his creation and probably existed with some possible variation in their rights and privileges before the Mohammedan conquests in Hindustan. From this circumstances as well as other collateral considerations, there is reason to suppose that the new invaders, who claimed the Revenues of the Country from motives of Policy and Humanity, employed the ancient possessors of the land as their Agents for the Collection of the Taxes of the State'.

* Please note that the words *Zemin* and *dar* are both Persian and therefore could not have existed in Hindu India. The word that was prevalent in Akbar's time was 'Bhuinya'. The 'Bara Bhuinya' or the Twelve Principal Landlords then ruled Bengal. 'Bhuin' is the colloquial of Sanskrit 'Bhumi' meaning land or earth and 'Bhuinya' means land-holders.

'Para 31 : Formerly Zemindars were bound to take the Roads and Bridges and whilst the amount of their Rents was permanent and the profits arising from the lands left to them, they had an interest in fulfilling the dictates of their duty; latterly these functions have been neglected and the suspension may be dated from the iniquitorial researches of Jaffier Khan'. (Murshid Quli Khan, Governor of Bengal Subah from 1704 to 1707 and 1710 to 1727).

'Para 32 : Preservation of the internal Peace of their Districts and the apprehension of thieves, murderers and other violators of the laws were amongst the assigned duties of the Zemindars. They were also obliged to attend and assist the sovereign for opposing invasions and suppressing rebellions, but it was not unusual to grant them a remission in their Rents, in equivalent for the expenses incurred by them in the discharge of these services.' (p. 268-269, Vol. 127). The report goes on not only giving useful informations but also tracing the origin of the system.

'Para 45 : Most of the considerable Zemindars in Bengal may be traced to an origin within the last century and half, and the extent of their jurisdictions has been considerably augmented during the time of Jaffier Khan and since by purchases from the original proprietors, by acquisitions in default of legal heirs or in consequence of the confiscation of lands of the Zemindars. Instances are even related in which zemindaries have been forced upon incumbents'. (p. 282-283, Vol. 127).

The Company also recorded 56 questions and answers about the Zemindar and the Zemindary. It also gave instances to prove how ephemeral were the rights of land in the Mughal times. The evidence of a letter written by Emperor Aurungzeb to his son clearly demonstrates the contention. The Emperor writes, 'Hussan Ally Khan hath quarrelled with my grandson Moezuddeen and left him without permission. The prince hath written to me of his haughty behaviour. You will therefore strike off the Munsubb and resume his Jaghire as an example to others'. (p. 318 Vol. 128).¹³³

It is clear from the above evidence that the Company was trying to evolve a settlement which would retain the best features of the

¹³³Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 2 April 1788, pp. 243, 268-269, 282-283 & 318.

~~The~~ system that was prevalent in Hindu and Mughal India. Their idea was to give permanent right of land as existed in the Hindu times and then couple it with the Mughal system of revenue security. The main outline of the new system was therefore that as long as the revenue was timely remitted to the Government Treasury the land could be held permanently. Any default would result in the sale of the revenue at Sunset of the given date to the highest bidder. It may therefore be justifiably said that the Permanent Settlement was an Indian system having elements of Hindu and Mughal land tenure systems which was garnished by the English legal administrative organisation. To pay the Revenue in time the land holders had to look after their property vigorously. Zemindary became a business transaction and those who pursued it seriously, thrived. Many landholders created under-farmers to have the security of paying revenue in time, thus a system of stepped lease evolved after sometime and created many subsidiary intermediate rights. It was only in the late nineteenth and the twentieth century that both the produce of the land and the rental from subsidiary interests increased to a very great extent under the Permanent Settlement. But the terms landlord and tenant never even remotely resembled the 'lord' and the 'serf'.

Sumner reported that the main collecting Agents were the *Etmaumdars* (Stewards) and *Carmachurries* (clerks) who collected the Revenue from the tenants. They deducted their own wages, charges for paper, ink and dye, cutchery repairs and peon wages from the rents. The balance was then remitted to the *Izeradar* (Farmer).

The *Izeradars* (farmers) received the rents from the different *Carmachurries* and deducted the expenses of a naib (deputy), writers, *Vackeels* and peons. They defrayed the sundry expenses of their Cutcherries and must at least maintain their family as well as servants. The amount of their agreement they paid to the Zemindar. '

The Zemindars received the rents of *Izeradars*; they kept a Dewan, Carcoons, Writers, *Vackeels*, *Jemmautdars*, Peons, *Pykes* and all sorts of guards. They further defrayed the charge of *poolbundy* (repairs of Dams*), *khaulbundy* (stopping overflowing of the creeks), repaired the Cutcherries and incurred expenditure on paper, ink, dye etc. at the place of General

* Small bridges should be a better word.

Collection. Sumner calculated 30% less in this system and considered that the total charges of this system was very high, so he suggested streamlining the system as a result of which the Revenue Farming was started in 1769.¹³⁹ The actual system of management of the land under the Mughal Government was reported by W.B. Sumner as early as in 1765.

Kantababu presented a statement of balances as a revenue farmer as soon as 1183 was over (1776-1777). This list shows that there was quite a large sum due as unrecovered balance. There is nothing to prove that in spite of the petition, made by Lokenath and Baisnabchurn Nandy on 30 July 1779, requesting that an order may be issued to the Superintendent of the Khalsa to summon the defaulting persons and oblige them to pay whatsoever, upon a fair examination, they may appear entitled to, there was any action taken. The Petitioners repeatedly requested to be relieved from the heavy charge of interest that they were paying by contracting debts to pay the Revenue in time. 'By Contracting debts ourselves the whole of the demands of Government, on account of the Mahls which we farmed or stood security for in the late five years settlement have been duly discharged conformably to our engagements'.¹⁴⁰ The arrears totalling to Rs. 2,93,559 stood there, even two years after the conclusion of the settlement. If this list is compared with properties held under Permanent Settlement some idea regarding the beginning of the system, however crude, may be formed. (See pages 227-228)

The thirty two properties in the ledger of 1191 can be broadly divided into three categories. The first had only Baharbund Pargana, the income of which was over one lakh Rupees. Then there was a big drop. The second category having an income of over Rs. 3000 to Rs. 20,000 consists of only six properties. The rest of the properties which form the third category and are 25 in number have an income between Rs. 5 to Rs. 3000. Even if a sub-category of over Rs. 1000 is created it will cover only 5 properties. The inevitable conclusion is that Kantababu took over low income properties and by his efficient management made them high yielding. One example would be sufficient. In the year under review Kusthia's income was only Rs. 450-6-10. Twenty years later it had increased to Rs. 25000. (See page 229)

¹³⁹Bengal Secret and Military Consultations of 20 December 1765 and 4 November 1766.

¹⁴⁰Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 30 July 1779, p. 149-159.

**Statement accompanying the Petitions of Lokenaut Nundee and Bisno Churn Nundee
Account Balances due to Lokenaut Nundee and Bisno Churn Nundee from the Mutazeree and Malzaminee Mahls at
the end of 1183**

Purgannah	Name of Kutkendars on whom they have demands	Mutazeree Mahl	Malzaminee Mahl	Money lent	Total Demand
1. Jehangeerpur	Bireswar Roy, Cossinut Roy, Luckyaunt Roy, Bishennarain Roy, Goury Gaunt Roy and sons of Bireswar Roy.	61,302- 4-11-1	×	×	61,302- 4-11-1
2. Huttendah	Golly Sunker Roy, Security, Derneedar Roy.	3,315-10-10-0	×	×	3,315-10-10-0
3. Culbereah	Atul Beharee Roy, Sham Roy, Ram Conaee Roy, Securities: Bejenut Roy, Narain Roy & Ram Kumar Roy	3,611- 6- 7-0	×	×	3,611- 6- 7-0
4(a) Vizeerabad Taluck of	Nurry Persaud Roy	580- 9- 9-2	×	×	580- 9- 9-2
Hederam Roy (b) Do Division Taluck of	Gorachand Naut	34- 6- 0-0	×	291-0-0-0	325- 6- 0-0
Neelkanto Roy	Annunt Chund Roy, Oudechund Bhurto (?) and Golab Roy	35,841- 7-18-3	×	2,801-0-0-0	38,642- 7-18-3
5. Chhunacolly	Burkutullah Chowdhury				
6(a) Satsikka	Security: Md. Askar Khan, Zemindar of the Pargana,	20,537- 7-18-0	×	×	20,537- 7-18-0
(b) Do Division	Khas Collection. Ryotts	4,523-12- 6-0	×	×	4,523-12- 6-0
7(a) Amberabad	Khas Collection due from Zemindar and Talookdars	32,013- 5-12-0	×	8,756-0-0-0	40,769- 5-12-0
(b) Do Division	Due from Meer Dost Ally, Security : Meer Hossain Ally	23,950- 6-10-0	×	×	23,950- 6-10-0
(c) Do Division	Bissenchund Tewary, Security: Kishen Chund Tewary	35,931- 3- 0-0	×	×	35,931- 3-0-0
8. Sorkar Mankar	Talook of Sambunaut Sing & Rungonot Sing				
9. Taherpur	Talook of Lucky Sarroosutty	×	22,001- 0- 0-0	×	22,001- 0- 0-0
10. Khaseypur	Talook Mirtunjee Chowdhury & Pran Kissen Chowdhury	×	5,711- 3- 0-0	×	5,711- 3- 0-0
		×	4,106-15- 7-0	817-0-0-0	4,923-15- 7-0
11. Shummus Khancee	Talook of Kero etc.	×	817- 3- 2-2	×	817- 3- 2-2

Purgunnah	Name of Kutkendars on whom they have demands	Mutazeree Mahl	Malzaminee Mahl	Money lent	Total Demand
12. Turuff Jeecur					
Hattee:	Talook of Meer Salamat Ally	×	858- 1-18-0	×	848- 1-18-0
13. Do Doss Para	" " Lull Doss Patel	×	71-12- 9-0	×	71-12- 9-0
14. Do Dec Gaum	" " Hurr Ram and Rudder Ram	×	918- 8- 0-0	×	918- 8- 0-0
15. Do Nusseepur	" " Diaram Chowdhury & Indu Chowdhury	×	875- 7-15-0	×	875- 7-15-0
16. Do Sudkie	" " Kissenchurn Chowdhury,				
	Chandranarain Roy	×	55- 5- 0-0	×	55-5- 0-0
17. Do Curria	" " Kissen Deo Roy	×	747- 5-15-2	×	747- 5-15-2
18. Perg. Cutubpore etc.	From Ryotts and Talookdars	×	23,036- 0-16-0	×	23,036- 0-16-0
		2,21,642- 0-12-2	59,251-15-13-0	12,665-0-0-0	2,93,559- 0- 5-2

A Summary of the Ledger of 1191 (1784-1785)

Property:	Income:	Expenditure:	Reference :
1. Turruf Bhadur	Pages missing		page 1
2. Pargana Kantanagar	Do		page 2
3. Kismat Ramkrishnabati	Rs. 51- 0- 0	Rs. ×	„ 3
4. Mahalandi Shoregunge	„ 236-14- 0	×	„ 4
5. Taraf Bhabanandapur	„ 409- 3- 5	Rs. 277- 8-0	pp. 55 & 58
6. Habaspur Meuza etc.	„ 4,659- 5- 5	×	page 6
7. Pargana Gaibari	„ 4,274- 3-10	×	„ 7
8. Pargana Kulberia	„ Torn		„ 8
9. Jote Sarbajaya	„ 775- 5-15	×	„ 9
10. „ Katlamari	„ 747- 2-10	×	„ 10
11. Naodagram	„ 18- 9- 5	×	„ 11
12. Chak Brindabanpur	„ 369-12-15	×	„ 12
13. Pargana Baharbund	„ 1,44,449- 9-10	Rs. 1,28,116- 4-0	pp. 13, 28-32, 48-49
14. „ Jobeesha	„ 12,461-14- 0	×	„ 14
15. „ Naopara	„ 2,256- 2- 0	×	„ 15
16. Taraf Raghunathpur	„ 18,811- 0-10	×	„ 16
17. „ Budhar	„ 1,035- 4- 0	×	„ 17
18. „ Kusthia	„ 450- 6-10	×	„ 18
19. „ Balliapur	„ 2,605-11- 0	×	„ 19
20. Purandarpur	„ 7,563-11-17-2	×	„ 20
21. Mouza Saindhara	„ 158- 9- 0	Rs. 1,375- 4-0	„ 21
22. Pargana Dashazarce	„ 5- 0- 0	„ 1,046- 0-0	„ 22
23. Kismat Sahajapur	„ 1,113-14- 0	×	„ 23
24. Hat Sripur	„ 709-11-15	×	pp. 24 & 57
25. Unasab Banni	„ 179- 3-15	×	„ 25
26. Taraf Badiabpur	„ 3,900- 3-10	×	„ 26
27. Kismat Jaogram	„ 1,390-14- 0	×	„ 27
28. Nayanagar Badkulla	„ 215- 3- 0	„ 34- 0-0	„ 33
29. Taraf Hatgachha	„ 6- 6- 0	„ 6- 6-0	„ 34
30. Mouza Maheshpur	„ 25- 0- 0	„ 24-11-0	„ 34
31. Chowk Hijli	„ 11-13- 0	„ 31- 0-0	„ 35
32. Mouza Kurumba	„ 41-14-10	×	„ 35
Rs. 2,08,932-14-12-2		Rs. 1,30,911- 1-0	

The accounts of 1191 establish that besides Murshidabad, where Kantababu had the largest number, his properties were also in Rangpur, Dinajpur, Faridpur, Junglemahal and Pargana Barbaksing. The income and expenditure statement show that his profit from these properties amounted to about a lakh of Rupees.

At the time of making his will Kantababu was leaving his son Lokenath Zemindary income worth 5 lakh of Rupees in his secular estates and an income worth 1 Lakh of Rupees in his religious estates.

Unfortunately no record of the properties held by Kantababu immediately after the Permanent Settlement has yet been found. The account book of Lokenath of the nearest period is that of 1208 or 1801-1802.

that is almost 12 years later. This also being a cash book and not a ledger, cannot be considered to be exhaustive. Moreover the system of accounting being cash-basis, the property from where no collection was made during the year would not be found. The collection also being Mouza based (several Mouzas comprised a Pargana), it is not always easy to decipher and identify. For example the collections from Mouzas Khidirpur or Girdharpur might suggest that these Mouzas were new acquisitions but that view would be wrong as both the Mouzas were the part of Kantanagar Pargana which was already the property of Kantababu. The list presented should therefore be only considered tentative and not exhaustive. The first exhaustive list however is found only in 1804, when Lokenath died and his estates were taken over by the Court of Wards, as his only son Harinath was a minor. In 1832 another exhaustive list is found when Harinath died at the age of 30 and his children were minors.

The Cash book of 1208 relating to Khaznaknana or Revenue Department of Lokenath does present a picture of the Zemindary, which like an old photograph is much faded and therefore useless for details. Nevertheless it is an account which can be worked with and should therefore be treated with the importance it deserves.

The difficulties faced in working with this account are many; firstly, properties are generally entered in their lowest denomination either as a Taraf or a Mouza or a Hoodda or Dihi, which though certainly the best way of effecting efficient collection, creates confusion. This confusion is further enhanced when it is found that between 1789 and 1801 at least four more Kantanagar Parganas were formed in different districts. It is possible that these Parganas were created after the death of Kantababu to commemorate his memory. Certainly this was the most effective and loving memorial to the departed, though a rather tough exercise for the posterity. The Kantanagar Parganas were established in Dinajpur, Faridpur, Rajshahi and Birbhum Districts. The second difficulty arises out of the habit of writing the name of a District or a Pargana on the top and following it up with a few Mouzas or Tarafs of that District or Pargana and then without any warning including Mouzas and Tarafs of other Districts or Parganas as well. This creates no end of confusion, as different groups are presented under the heading of the same District or Pargana at different times. Only after careful listing it has been possible to somewhat establish the identity of each of the

properties, but of course absolute correctness of the list cannot be claimed. The third difficulty crops up from the fact that Revenue payment of two Districts or more were coupled at times, making it quite impossible to know the total Revenue paid for each District or Pargana. Here also different groups were coupled together at different times. All this make it rather difficult to present the account but a list of properties can be made out of the Cash Book which is presented below. It will be found that in 1801 Lokenath held properties in nine Districts.

Eight years after the death of his father, Kantababu, and twelve years after the Permanent Settlement, Maharaja Lokenath Roy held the following properties in 1208 or 1801-1802:—

<i>District</i>	<i>Properties</i>	<i>Approx. annual income</i>
1. Rungpore	—Pargana Baharbund Pargana Bhitarbund do Gaibari	Rs. 2,00,000
2. Dinajpore	—Pargana Kantanagar including Taraf Raghunathpore	
3. Birbhum or Jungle Mahal	—Pargana Kantanagar including Taraf Belliapur and Chati	
4. Bhagalpur	—Pargana Dashazaree	
5. Nator (later called Rajshahi)	—Parganas Parwari, Amrool, including Tarafs Gachinda, Kamargaon, Durgapur and Dihi Brajapur & Bhagsundar etc.	
6. Burdwan	—Kismat Jabagram, Pargana Mahalandi etc.	
7. Faridpur	—Jalalpur Mahal, Taraf Habaspur.	
8. Nadia	—Pargaras Lokenathnagar, Sajadpur, Lokenathpur, Plassey including Dihi Meherpur, Mangalpara, Sarbanga- pur, Dihi Hazipur, Nabatbati, and Rajpur, Kusthia etc.	Rs. 2,00,000

9. Murshidabad — Parganas Kantanagar, Chunakhali, Azimnagar, Naopara etc., including Tarafs Bhadoor, Khidirpur, Giridharpur, Hanspur, Methia, Purandarpur, Gopalpur, Kulberia, Pargopjan ; Hoodas Patharghata, Babatbati and Kashba, Kismat Saidabad, Hat Sripur, Tarafs Mamoodpur-Gajdarpara, Bhatpara, Tarafs Mitrapur, Katlamari, Bodha, Ramapur, Kaochapa, Khayra, Bhabanandapur, Ghaneepur, Jote Sarbojoy, Hooda Seean, Tarafs Rashipur, Raghampur, Mahtranbati, Shorgunge, Jankarbanbandri (?), Dihis Harishbati and Bratabati, Tarafs Janmahammadpur, Purandarpur, Mahespur, Pitgaon, Manetaga, Bhudhar, Kantadeya, Jote Mengpoya, Chak Brindabanpur, Khairamari (P. Islampur), Mathabhanga, Tarafs Baniapur, Dhamipur, Makhadpur, Mouza Andiram etc. Rs. 3,00,000

Religious Trust and Debuttar Properties :—

Uttar Pradesh	— Taraf Duhabehara etc.	
Murshidabad	— Tarafs Andiran Katlamari Purandarpur	
Nator	— Taraf Rajpur	
Nadia	— Taraf Naogaon in Dihi Meherpur	
Dinajpore	— Taraf Jobeesha	
Burdwan	— Taraf Sijna.	Rs. 1,00,000
		Rs. 6,00,000
		(minimum)
		Rs. 8,00,000
		(maximum)

The cash book is an interesting document in the social-economic history of the period. The account records Indianised English words such as :—stamp, Company, court, decree, number, note, receipt, boat and

Collectoree (meaning the Collectorate), proving that the infiltration of the English language into Bengali was quite discernible even in 1801.

The Permanent Settlement saw within 15 years of its promulgation the death of both Kantababu and his son Lokenath which certainly checked the growth of the Estate by the lack of leadership. The minor Harinath was fortunate that the property was not allowed to fall into evil hands, but was saved in its entirety by being managed by the Court of Wards for almost sixteen years.

CHAPTER IV

THE NARRATIVE OF BIJAYGARH

The Benaras affairs always claimed some victim. Nanda Kumar was charged with conspiracy with Bulwant Singh, Raja of Benaras and the Nawab had to send him to Calcutta for trial in 1765.¹ The battle of Buxar and the understanding with the King of Delhi and the Nawab of Oudh enabled the Company to push its frontiers upto Benaras. In 1775 the Company assumed the sovereignty of the district leaving its ruler Raja Chait Singh, virtually independent under their sovereignty. Chait Singh of course owed his existence as a ruler to Hastings, who had saved him from being absorbed by the Nawab of Oudh, setting him up as a Zemindar under the Company. During the period of struggle between Hastings and the Majority, Chait Singh completely allied himself with the Majority and as a result received some unusual privileges like having his own coinage and police force. He was however warned that his authority depended on his punctual payment of revenue and non alliance with any other State.

During the years following 1775, Chait Singh's affairs were protected by the Majority. As soon as the Majority was destroyed, Hastings became anxious to control the affairs of Chait Singh. The dispute started earlier, now became very serious. Chait Singh therefore kept information of the movement and actions of the Governor General. The Company intercepted an information sent by Shambhurath an agent of Chait Singh to Maharaj Misra that the Governor General's attempt to appoint an Officer of the Company to take charge of Chait Singh's forces have been foiled by Francis and Fowke. The communication bears a line of information about Kantababu. "The affairs of Kantababu are as formerly."² The meaning of the sentence is mysterious. What could be a plausible explanation of this cryptic message is that Chait Singh kept a close watch on Kantababu (as he did on General Coote). That he was desirous of contacting him is proved by later events, but this line cannot perhaps be taken to mean that any communication was already established.

¹The Calendar of Persian Correspondence. Vol. II, Letters dated 1 and 3 April 1765.

²Ibid., Vol. V, No. 854 dated 31 March 1778.

Hastings was also keeping a close watch on Chait Singh, gathering as much information as was possible about his military power. Graham wrote to Hastings from Benaras, 'Among the former (Forts), the only one of consideration is Beedjigur, the paper transmitted to you in my letter of 20th instant contains a pretty distinct and just account of its situation, which by the assistance of nature is so advantageous that, that well stored with ammunition and provisions, and but with a very small body of men it would sustain a long seige against a numerous army. This opinion is drawn principally from the natives and I apprehend would only hold good when opposed to the forces of a country power whose artillery is not only inferior to ours but badly senced (sic-?) with all our superiority.' Graham also informed that the predecessors of Chait Singh paid a rent for the Fort to the Raja of Rohtas which had been discontinued by Bulwant Sirgh. The date of the letter was 30 July 1778.³

Two years later, almost to the day, Hastings had made up his mind either to get the payment from Chait Singh or to punish him and was on his way to Benaras. On 14 July 1781 he was on the river beyond Murshidabad. The favourite course that was generally taken by Hastings was from Calcutta to Sooksagur, then Rangamatty, Murshidabad or Cossimbazar, Bhagalpur, Patna, and then to Benaras. The route that was taken up by Hastings in this trip was :

Calcutta to Barrackpore—	one day.	Arrived July	8th 1781.
Barrackpore to Murshidabad—	2 days	„ „	10th.
Murshidabad to Rajmahal—	2 days.	Stayed from July	13th to July 15th.
Rajmahal to Bhagalpur—	ore day.	Arrived July	16th.
			Halted upto 23rd July.
Bhagalpur to Monghyr —	one day	„ „	24th. Short Halt.
Monghyr to Bankipur —	one day	„ „	26th. Stayed in Patna.
Bankipur to Dinapur —	one day	„	'August 11th.
Dinapur to Buxar —	one day	„ „	12th.
Buxar to Banaras—	63 miles 2 days	„ „	14th, 1781

Kantababu had gone to Benaras earlier under the instructions of the Governor and was trying to find an amicable settlement of the dispute by discussing the various points with Myrza Abdulla Beg, the Vakeel

³Brit. Mus., Add. Mss., 29141, f. 190-192.

of Chait Singh. Kantababu was staying in Benaras for this purpose and had his 'own house' there.⁴

With the arrival of Hastings on 14 August 1781 the situation grew tense. He took up his abode in the great fort of Chunar moving frequently between Chunar and Benaras. The English held some papers which contained an appeal, in which the Raja had tried to arouse other rulers to rebellion against the oppression of the Governor General.⁵ Hastings was almost certain that a careful preparation was being made for an insurrection, and Raja Chait Singh was still trying to continue the discussion as that would give him more time to fully prepare himself. Kantababu carried on the negotiations and in spite of gaining the respect of the Raja and his family, could not achieve the desired effect of getting the stipulated money out of Chait Singh. For two days Hastings' movement between Chunar and Benaras showed the urgency in which the Governor viewed the problem. The shortage of money hurt Hastings very much. Benaram Pundit immediately offered the money. The incident may be read from Hastings' narrative about Benaras.

'Benaram Pundit immediately and with eagerness which belonged to his character, told me that he had a lack of Rupees in ready money lying in his house in Benaras, which I might take, if I could find any means to receive and convey it to Chunar; and the younger brother advised as the simplest expedient, to sent a battalion of Sepoys for that purpose which could easily go and return without interruption, as there were no troops stationed near the town on that side of the river, offering to accompany it himself and to bring away the money. I rejected this proposal for an obvious reason, and preferred the trial of the means which the shroffs are supposed to practise for the conveyance of money on such occasions. I accepted a draught (sic) on their family for the sum, payable to Cantoo Baboo, my Dewan, who had (been) left in Benaris and sent it inclosed in a letter to him with directions to concert with Gopaul Dass, the means of conveying it to Chunar. This proved ineffectual, Cantoo Baboo could not be found.'⁶ In utter desperation, when

⁴Sydney C. Grier, *The Letters of Warren Hastings to his Wife*, p. 122.
and Warren Hastings, *Narrative of the Insurrection of Banaris*, p. 33-35.

⁵Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee of the House of Commons, being a Committee of the whole house. The Evidence of 16th March 1786 of Major Gardner, pp. 13-22 (John Stockdale 1786)

⁶Warren Hastings, *Narrative of the Insurrection of Banaris* (1782, Reprinted 1853.) p. 33-34.

all attempts to secure the money from Raja Chait Singh failed, Hastings issued an order to William Markham, Resident of Benaras, to arrest the Raja. The order was issued from Benaras on the 15 August, 1781 at 10 at night.⁷ Simultaneously Hastings issued orders to Major Popham on the same night to be in readiness to arrest Chait Singh.⁸ The Raja was arrested and kept confined in his palace in Benaras at Shiwala Ghat, from where he wrote letters to the Governor General pledging his loyalty to him, calling Hastings, 'My Protector'.⁹ Raja Chait Singh also sent a message to 'Cantu Babu,' which was later reduced to writing.¹⁰

Hastings reported to the Calcutta Council that on the 16th August, 'Large bodies of armed men had crossed the river from Ramnagar and proceeded to the Raja's house. What followed is a scene of such horror that it is with greatest reluctance I submit to the painful duty of relating it.' . . . 'The whole multitude rushed in, and made an instantaneous and fierce attack upon the Sepoys' . . . 'In the midst of this confusion the Raja found means of escape.'¹¹ Hastings immediately asked Major Popham to proceed to the seat of disturbance.

Major Popham reported on the 16 August, after visiting the disturbed area, 'Consequent to an order for the detachment under my command to proceed to the support of the Grenadier Companies under Lieutenant Stalker I carried it with as much expedition as possible to Adjet Singh's palace, which I found to be entirely evacuated by the Raja's people, who were already landed on the opposite side of the river.

'Of the two Companies commanded by Lieutenant Stalker very few remained alive, and the majority of those appeared to the severely wounded. The bodies of the Lieutenant Stalker, Scott and Simes were lying within a small distance of each other shockingly mangled and without any sign of life.'¹² Hastings reported the death of 2 Commanding Officers, 1 Subadar, 2 Jemadars, 2 Havildars, 2 Naiks, 1 Drummer and

⁷Proceedings of the Secret Committee of 4th September, 1781. (Selections from State Papers) Forrest, Vol. III (1890) Letter from Hastings to Markham. p. 785-786.

⁸Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29150, f. 96.

⁹Proceedings of the Secret Committee of 4th September 1781. Letters of Raja Chait Singh, p. 786-787.

¹⁰Articles of Impeachment of Warren Hastings, Esq. as presented to the House of Commons on 4 April 1786. Article III. Part III. No. XIV. (J. Debrett. 1786).

¹¹Proceedings of the Secret Committee of 4th September 1781. Letter of Hastings to the Calcutta Council, p. 789-790.

¹²Ibid., Report of Major Popham., p. 788.

66 Sepoys. The list of wounded was 2 Subadars, 7 Havildars, 3 Drummers and Fifers and 74 Sepoys.¹³ The tablet in the palace wall of Benaras read as follows—‘The tablet has been erected by the Govt. of United Province to preserve the last earthly resting place of—

Lieut. Arch. Scott—1st Battalion Sepoys

Lieut. Jer. Symes—2nd Battalion Sepoys

Lieut. J. Stalker—Resd. Body Guard

who were killed with 200 Sepoys, August 17th, 1781, Near this spot doing their duty.’

How Kantababu got involved with the incidents of the 16 August will never be known. Most probably he had responded to the message or letter from Chait Singh and had gone to the Benaras palace to negotiate. It was at this moment he was abducted as Chait Singh himself was making his escape. An European inhabitant of Benaras known as Mr. Barnett and one of Markham’s Maulavis were also arrested and taken away.¹⁴ As the fighting of the Shiwala Ghat became intense only after the departure of the Raja, it is presumed that Kantababu was not a witness to the massacre of 16th August, which the U.P. Government mistakenly thought to have happened a day later. Writing of the incident later, Hastings admits to have confused the time of the incident. He writes, ‘Gopaul Dass was seized, I forget at what exact period of time and sent to Luteefpoor; and in a short time after Cantoo Baboo was also taken and conveyed to the same place of confinement.’¹⁵ Nothing is known about the confinement of Gopaul Dass but it is clear that Kantababu, Mr. Barnett and the Maulavi were first taken to Luteefpoor and then to Bijaygarh by an infrequented route along with the ladies of Chait Singh’s family.

The Governor General reported about further disasters from Chunar on 27th August 1781, that, ‘the Raja escaped and fled to Luttefgar (sic.). On 19th a large force returned to Ramnagar.’ . . . ‘The two corps having joined, Captain Mayaffre, the senior Officer without waiting for Major Popham, against orders, marched on the morning of the 20th precipitately into the narrow streets of the town where in an instant he fell

¹³Ibid., of 18th October 1781. Governor General’s Review Roll of the killed & wounded etc.

¹⁴Sydney C. Grier, *The Letters of Warren Hastings to his Wife, Intro & Anno.* (1905), p. 152-153.

¹⁵Warren Hastings, *Narrative of the Insurrection of Banaris*, p. 33-34.

with Captain Doxatt and 33 rangers and almost all the sepoys of Captain Blair's battalion that had entered with him; the rest of the detachment returned to Chunar with the loss of 2 guns, 1 howitzer and 103 men of all denominations killed.' Hastings further reported that the Raja's boat was on the move, and that 'the Raja's forces are divided between Ramnagar and Luteefgur (sic.). His family is at Bijeygur. His fixed establishment exceeds 10,000 men and all his recruits bear arms.'¹⁶ The concern and strain that Hastings had to face between the 16 and 23 August is discernible in his letter. In the list of the English Gentlemen at Benaras on the 21 August, as prepared by E. Hay, Deputy Secretary, a postscript adds, 'All the Gentlemen of this catalogue accompanied the Governor General to Chunar except Mr. Barnett of whom there are no certain accounts.'¹⁷ This proves that Barnett's abduction was not known at that time.

There can be no doubt that Kantababu and Barnett were at Bijaygarh by the 25 August. The Maulavi was murdered most probably at Luteefpur. It was here that Barnett received a rather contemptuous treatment from Chait Singh. He was obliged to write to Hastings proposing peace terms and the 'India Gazette' reported that he was made to dance (*notch*) and sing for the amusement of the King. Barnett does not seem to be a respectable character. Sir Elijah Impey refers to him in a letter as "the Jew of Banaris", and gives an account of his proceedings later on, which shows that he was a diamond merchant, of a type that would now-a-days seek its profits in transactions such as are veiled under the letters signed J.D.B.¹⁸ Of the three prisoners Kantababu was treated most honourably and as he followed the entourage of the King's mother he evaded the wrath of Chait Singh. Kantababu had no opportunity to witness the preparation of fighting, that the Raja was making by dividing his forces between Ramnagar and Luteefpur and prepared to fight the English Company. Barnett was later sent to Bijaygarh.

Kantababu was at Bijaygarh for about a month when he was treated as a guest and struck acquaintance with Panna, the mother of Chait Singh.

In course of a month Chait Singh was put to flight. The Governor

¹⁶Proceedings of the Secret Committee of 18th October 1781. GG's letter to Council. p. 796-797.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 802-803.

¹⁸Sydney. C. Grier, The Letters of Warren Hastings to his Wife, p. 152-153.

General wrote to the Calcutta Council from the Chunar Fort about the Company's victory on 20 September 1781. The English army achieved complete victory over the forces of Chait Singh both at Pateeta and Luteefpoor. He wrote, 'I regard this victory as a decisive turn of our public influence but the greatest proportion of my joy is derived from the consideration that it was gained with little bloodshed, an advantage which I attribute as I expected it, to the superior skill and known composure nor less humanity of Major Popham. Major Crawford arrived here—yesterday morning much harassed but without loss or impediment on his way.' On 22nd September, Hastings wrote, 'The Raja that evening (20th September) fled from Luteefpoor'... 'I was yesterday in Major Popham's camp and visited the Fort of Pateeta and its entrenchments.' On 23 September he reported that Major Balfour took possession of the Ramnagar fort evacuated the evening before.¹⁹

Hastings was glad to know that Kantababu had been released from Bijaygarh and was at Luteefpoor. He wrote to Mrs. Marion Hastings from Chunar on 22nd September 1781, 'I have to tell you that Advice just arrived from Luteefpoor that Cantoo and Mr. Barnett are both arrived there in safety, dismissed from Bidjiygur.'²⁰ Only later he realised that he had not written anything about this matter before, so to make amends and clear the confusion he wrote on 24 September to his wife, 'I have to add that Cantoo and Mr. Barnett were carried with the Rajah in his flight to Bidjeygur and there released. They are at Luteefpoor or on their way hither : a joyful event and a public demonstration of the depressed state of this Man of blood'.... 'while I write Cantoo is arrived, and with me. He says that Bidjeygur is not so strong as Chunar, the Garrison of 250 men, and with the Rajah, who was on the point of flying the country, about 1000'.²¹

Being now satisfied at the turn of events Hastings proceeded to give a short description of the engagement between his army and Chait Singh. He had sent a fuller description to the Supreme Council, Hastings

¹⁹Proceedings of the Secret Committee of 18th October 1781. Hastings' letters to Council. p. 804-805.

²⁰Sydney. C. Grier, *The Letters of Warren Hastings to his Wife*, Letter No. VII. p. 152-153.

Also Popham's letter to Hastings. *Brit. Mus., Add. Mss.* 29150, f. 404.

'Cantoo Baboo and Mr. Barnett have been dismissed and are now at Luteefpore on their way to you. 23rd September 1781.'

²¹S. C. Grier. *Op. Cit.* Letter No. X. p. 160-161.

described to his beloved wife, 'The Fort of Pateeta* lies South East about 7 miles, Luteespore at the same distance beyond it in the same line. The Rajah was at Luteespore. His forces divided between both. Our plan was to attack both at once, while all expected us to begin at Ramnagur. On the 15th at 10 P.M. Major Crabb marched and making a large circuit over rocks and hills came on the back of Luteespore, on the 19th, undiscovered. On the 20th, he attacked and defeated a body of 2000 killing 150; and the 21st entered Luteespoor, evacuated the preceding evening. Major Popham marched against Pateeta the 16th at 3 A.M. and after battering it 2 days without impression, on the morning of the 20th he stormed and took it, dispersing 2 bodies at the same time in the field. The Rajah fled that evening with precipitation. I know not what is become of him or his troops. Ramnagur was evacuated the same evening and I hear that his other garrisons have followed the example. I went (rode) on the 21st to Pateeta, and admire how it was taken in its actual state. At One I had the happiness to hear 21 Guns regularly fired from Luteespoor, which we all understand to be the signal of instant possession. Major Belfour took peaceably²² the possession of Ramnagur yesterday afternoon. Bidjeygur, a place of great reputed strength remains. It is 32 miles from Luteespoor and Major Popham's next object. It is enough that our credit and influence are restored.'²²

As the next object was the Fort of Bijaygarh, Hastings conveyed Kantababu's intelligence about the place to Popham. Popham replied to Hastings from Camp Luteespore on 25 September, 'The intelligence you have received from Cantoo Baboo agrees pretty exactly with mine and as I am exceedingly anxious to take advantage of the enemy's panic, I shall march through the pass tomorrow morning.' On the 29 September Hastings sent a detailed letter to Wheler at Calcutta.²³

Hastings was now in full control of the City of Benaras. On 28 September Moheep Narayan, a nephew of Chait Singh, was enthroned as the King of Benaras.²⁴ The next day 29th September, a pro-

* The real name of the place is Pateehata, the H is not silent.

²²Ibid., Letters VIII & IX. p. 153-156.

²³Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29150., ff. 425 & 484.

²⁴Proceedings of the Secret Committee of 12 November 1781. Copy of the Administrative reforms attached to the Governor General's letter of 1st November 1781 from Benaras to the Calcutta Council, p. 816-818.

clamation was issued in Persian language and made public from Benaras in which Raja Chait Singh and his brother Sujan Singh were divested of all their ranks and were declared rebels. The rebels and their descendants were declared to have forfeited all rights to their Zemindary of Benaras.²⁵

Hastings made an attempt to arrest Chait Singh. The royal hunt was on. Major James Crawford wrote to Hastings from Camp Burrilah on 1 October 1781, 'Cheyt Singhs....marched from the Fort of Agoree on the morning of the 29th and proceeded to Burdeo was accompanied by about two thousand horse and four thousand foot....he meant to proceed to Bundelcund.'²⁶ Major Popham wrote to the Sub-Secretary from 'Camp near Bijyeghur' on the 9th October 1781, 'The Raja by an unfrequented route reached Bijeyghur the next morning (1st. October 1781); but after having given some instructions to the Killadar, left his family in the place and fled to Agowree, a fort upon the Soane (river) close to the borders of his own district, with a quantity of treasure said to amount to a crore of rupees in elephants and camels.'... 'Major Moses Crawford with his regiment and Captain Salt's troops joined me the 21st Major James Crawford with his corps and one battalion is at present detached in pursuit of the Raja.'²⁷ By 18 October, Major Popham had established his camp in Bijaygarh. He wrote to Hastings, 'The height of the Fort above is 786 feet and above the Battery 86 feet,'²⁸ Popham informed on the 25 October from 'Camp Bijeeghur' that negotiations for surrendering the fort failing, canon fire was opened at 9 O'Clock but the walls of the Fort was found to be 'stronger than we imagined.'... 'The besieged have not fired a single shot all day.'²⁹ Hastings however immediately wrote back to Popham to treat Chait Singh's family with the 'respect and decorum due to their rank and still more to their misfortune.' He also wrote to Sir Elijah Impey in a private letter that he hoped that Popham would not be forced to use his shells, for the sake of the poor women.³⁰ What Hastings did not know was that shells had already been used to frighten the wits away of the 'poor women.'

²⁵Ibid., of 29th November 1781. The Proclamation enclosed in the Governor General's letter of 18th October 1781 (Forrest), p. 810-811.

²⁶Brit. Mus., Add. Mss., 29151, f. 1-2.

²⁷Proceedings of the Secret Committee of 29th November 1781 (Forrest), p. 811-813.

²⁸Brit. Mus., Add. Mss., 29151, f. 151-152.

²⁹Ibid., f. 197.

³⁰Sir Keith Feilng, Warren Hastings., p. 268.

It has not been possible throughout the flood of events to discuss the motive of the main actor of this drama namely Chait Singh, and the attitude of Hastings and his Banian towards him. While Hastings was determined to punish Chait Singh for his non-payment of dues, Chait Singh outwardly held a conciliatory visage. He met Hastings at Buxar and made his abject submission to him, then travelled with him to Benaras. The clash of interest though deep was remote from the outward show of rebellion which led Kantababu to take a much more rational view to the problem. The way he carried on the negotiations and then went to visit Chait Singh at his call, in the palace of Shiwala Ghat on the fateful day of 16th August, demonstrates that Kantababu, at least never suspected any violent undertaking by Chait Singh. As Kantababu was both a cautious and shrewd man, his complete confidence on Chait Singh can be considered the normal approach to the problem. Even after he was taken away and confined for a month, he did not hesitate for a moment to go back to Bijaygarh to help Panna, the mother of Chait Singh. All this makes Hastings' view of Chait Singh look rather exaggerated and emotional.

Even as early as 1778 Hastings was enquiring about Bijaygarh Fort because there was a strong rumour that 20 million Rupees were deposited in Bijaygarh alone. In 1781 the debt of the Bengal Government stood at £ 1,700,000³¹, so Hastings as he admitted, took the opportunity to punish Chait Singh, remarking; 'I had determined to make him pay largely for his pardon.'³² In Benaras also Balwant Singh's third wife offered to pay an annual increase of ten lakhs with a present of twenty lakhs on behalf of her nineteen year old grandson, Mahipnarayan, who eventually became the successor to Chait Singh. Hastings' attitude can therefore be summarised to have been to get a large amount of money and for that purpose to depose Chait Singh. It was this latter motive of the Governor General that led Chait Singh to revolt. Had he been certain from the beginning that Hastings was not intent on deposing him, he would not have risen in revolt and as Colonel Gardiner said during the evidence,³³ would not have resorted to force even to resist a fine of Rs. 50 Lakhs.

³¹Letter of Governor General to the Court of Directors, 1 July 1781. Bengal Letters Received XIV. p. 532-533.

³²Minutes of Evidence taken at the Trial of Warren Hastings Esq., p. 112-113.

³³Minutes of Evidence taken at the trial of Warren Hastings (Gardiner), p. 352.

Was it the greed for the treasures of the Bijaygarh Fort, which was at the back of Hastings' mind when he wrote that fateful letter of 22 October, 1781, which was so thoroughly misunderstood by Major Popham, and which was considered by some as the main perpetuator of the incidents that followed. Hastings wrote from Chunar, 'Mine of the same date has before this time acquainted you with my sentiments and resolutions respecting the Rani. I think every demand she had made to you, except that of safety and respect for her person is unreasonable. If the reports brought to me are true, your rejecting her offers, or negotiations with her, would soon obtain you the possession of the fort upon your own terms. I apprehend that she will continue to defraud the captors of a considerable part of the booty by being suffered to depart without examination. But this is your consideration not mine. I should be very sorry that your Officers and soliders lost any part of the reward to which they are so well entitled but I cannot make any objections as you must be the best judge of the expediency of the promised indulgence to the Rani.'³⁴

Almost as the direct result of the letter Popham resorted to cannon fire on the 25 October, but without any favourable result. The otherside led by Rani Panna must have been alarmed also. She was advised to write to Kantababu, the Dewan of the Governor General, that she offered to surrender the Fort provided she could leave in safety and honour for which the presence of Kantababu, she considered, absolutely necessary. On receipt of the letter Kantababu dutifully showed it to Hastings, who immediately welcomed the peaceful surrender of the Fort with all its famous treasures. Kantababu was immediately asked to proceed to Bijaygarh. The letter addressed to Popham on the 3 November 1781 made the conditions of the surrender crystal clear but the latter part of the letter in which the Governor General had instructed the Major to take strong action should the Ranny delay the surrender, read with his letter of 22 October, was perhaps an incitement to violence. That was also what Popham understood. His actions will establish that all plans for taking a violent action continued and the discussion about the peaceful surrender of the fort for which Kantababu was sent there, merely acted as a ruse to camouflage the real intentions of the army, who needed time for preparation of the springing of a mine. The whole

³⁴The History of the Trial of Warren Hastings Esq. Proceedings of Friday, March 13th 1795, 8th Session of the Trial in the House of Lords, (J. Debrett, London 1796.)

plan was carefully hidden from Kantababu, who had no idea that such an action was being contemplated.

The programme of action was so similar to those against Chait Singh that it is difficult to consider Hastings to be innocent about the affair. In Benaras also Kantababu was asked to negotiate and even after the arrest of the Raja he was allowed to visit him. Then the violent action was taken by Chait Singh. Similarly in Bijaygarh Kantababu was asked to negotiate peaceful surrender but was not told at any stage what was the action-plan of Popham. The letters that passed between Hastings and Popham, read chronologically between the 3 to 7 November, 1781, clearly establish that Popham only waited so long as his 'mine' was ready and fixed, attaching no importance at all to the negotiations that the Dewan of the Governor General was having with the Rani.

Hastings to Popham.

Benares, 3rd November 1781.

'My Duan Contoo Bauboo has shewn me a letter addressed to him from Panna, the mother of Chait Singh, entreating his intercession that she may be relieved from the Hardships and the Dangers of her present situation, and offering to surrender the Fort of Bidjygur and the treasure and the valuable effects contained in it, provided she can be assured of safety and Protection to her Person and Honour, and to that of her family and Attendants; and that Contoo himself will undertake to conduct her out of the Fort to such place of security as she shall choose. As this offer affords Prospect of your obtaining possession of the Fort and the Wealth that it contains, without further loss or delay, I have judged it proper to accept it and directed Contoo to repair to your Camp immediately with as many Doolies and Cauhars as can be collected for the conveyance of Panna, her family and such necessaries as are indispensable to women of their condition.

'You will be pleased, when Contoo arrives' with you, to send a Messenger of your own, accompanied with one from him, to acquaint Panna that I have sent him conformably to her Request, to receive and conduct her with safety and Honour to whatever place she may choose as her Residence, and that I am willing to grant her the same conditions to which I at first consented, provided that she delivers into your Possession, within Twenty four hours from the time of receiving your message, the Fort of Bidjegur with the Treasure and Effects lodged therein by Cheyt Sing or any other of his adherents, with the reserve only as above

mentioned of such articles as you shall think necessary to her sex and condition, or as you shall be disposed of yourself to indulge her with. If she complies, as I expect she will, it will be your part to secure the fort, and the property it contains, for the benefit of yourself and detachment. I have only further to request that you will grant an escort if Panna should require it, to conduct her here or wherever she may choose to retire to. But should she refuse to execute the promise she had made or delay it beyond the term of twenty four hours, it is my positive injunction, that you immediately put a stop to any further intercourse or negotiations with her and at no new pretext renew it. If she disappoints or trifles with me, after I have subjected my Duan to the disgrace of returning ineffectually, and of course myself to discredit, I shall consider it as an wanton affront and indignity which I can never forget: nor will I grant her any conditions whatever but leave her exposed to those dangers which she has chosen to risque, rather than trust to the clemency and generosity of our government. I think she cannot be ignorant of these consequences and will not venture to incur them: and it is for this reason I place a dependence on her offers, and have consented to send my Duan to her.’³⁵

Popham to Hastings. Camp Bijeeghur, 5th November 1781.

‘When your Dewan arrives I shall act agreeable to the instructions, you have given. I have not had the smallest interchange with the Rhannee of message or letter since the 29th’... ‘Should no accident happen, I hope it (the first gallery of the ‘mine’) will be completed tomorrow; but the loading will take a day or two more, which delay will afford Cantoo Baboo, I hope, sufficient time to persuade the Rhannee not to expose herself to the dangers of a storm, but should she falsify her promise, I have every expectation, that the mine will make us a practicable breach.’³⁶

This letter clearly establishes that Popham was getting ready to storm the fort, which he wanted to do by breaching the wall with the help of a mine which he was getting ready. As there was no resistance or fight offered from the fort, Popham could make his mine ready without any trouble. The next letter makes this amply clear.

³⁵The History of the Trial of Warren Hastings, Esquire. The Evidence of Major Popham. Proceedings of 13th March 1795 in the House of Lords (J. Debrett, London 1796) also Minutes of Evidence at the Trial of Warren Hastings Esquire (1785), p. 281-292 (National Library).

³⁶Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29151., f. 269-70.

Popham to Hastings. Camp Bijeeghur, 6th November 1781.

'The mine will be ready for loading by tomorrow evening and springing the next morning, which makes me wish that Cantoo Baboo may arrive some time tomorrow, in order to know the Rhanee's intentions, without impeding our operations at a critical juncture. The besieged have found out our mine, but I hope they will not have time to counterwork within.' Popham also reported that two Arzees came from the Rani that morning, in which she wanted a residence of her own to go to. Popham remarked that though he waited for her Vakil, he never showed up.³⁷

Popham to Hastings. Camp Bijeeghur, 7th November 1781.

'The mine will be ready for springing tomorrow evening, or next day morning; and as no Box can be conveyed into the Chamber, and the ground very damp, it will be impossible to delay after it is filled, as the powder will not preserve its strength for any time. This makes me very anxious for Cantoo Baboo's arrival at such a crisis; the consideration of which only, has led me to offer again to the Rhanee, through a Vaqueel, who came out today for her, the same terms of 15%, also to tell her, your declaration, that she should reside where she chooses in safety. I have given her twelve hours to come to a satisfaction. Should she accept of these conditions, she can be removed for the present to Cussumba, where there is a good home and there wait the arrival of the Dewan, who shall be furnished with every escort etc. to conduct her to the place she may chuse for her residence.'³⁸

So Popham was disregarding the orders of the Governor General in three ways. A) He was proposing to take action unilaterally before the arrival of Dewan Kantababu; B) Had given an ultimatum to the Rani to vacate within 12 hours the fort for which Hastings allowed 24 hours and C) As his 'mine' was ready but would become ineffectual after some time due to the dampness of the area, he was not prepared to wait for the negotiations that the Dewan might take up on his arrival.

With this background the scene now shifts to Bijaygarh and to the narrative of Kantababu, which gives a full description of the incidents that happened before him. Kantababu arrived at Bijaygarh on the night

³⁷Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29151., ff. 279-280.

³⁸Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29151., f. 281-282.

of the 9 November 1781 at 10 P.M.³⁹ 'The narrative of Kishan Kantoo Baboo' can be divided into different sections, the report running to seven pages. In the first part Kantababu relates why he was at Bijaygarh.

'(Kishan Kantoo Baboo) says that about the 2nd of November he received a letter from the Rani Panna in Bejigur, then besieged by the English, in which she said, she was ready to agree to any terms on the part of the Raja Chate Sing, if it were possible by any means to bring about an accommodation—that if such accommodation should be impracticable, she was ready to deliver up the Fort with the Treasure therein, on condition that Kontoo Baboo, the narrator, should go to Bejigur and cause her to be conveyed from thence in safety, and with honour. That the said Kontoo Baboo communicated the contents of this letter to the Governor General, who directed the said Kontoo to proceed to Bejigur and to inform the Rani from him that if she would cause the fort to be delivered up, together with the treasure belonging to Chate Sing, that her own private property and the private property of the other women of the fort, i.e. Ornaments, Clothes and Jewels should be preserved to her and them, that she should be protected in her honour and her dignity, and be conducted under the care of an English Escort wherever she thought proper to go; that if she chose to join her son Chate Singh, that she should be escorted with every circumstance of attention to the English frontiers, that Chate Sing should be informed of her approach, and that she should be delivered over in safety to such people as he might send to receive her. That if on the contrary, she should be disposed to direct her steps to some other Quarter, that wherever she chose to go, she should be escorted with the same care and attention, and that, in the latter case, a proper provision should be made for her future subsistence. That with this message he was directed by the Governor General to proceed to Bejigur and he was further directed to continue there, (but without the Fort), twenty four hours, for the Rani's assent, and that if it was not received during the period he was to return to the Governor General.'⁴⁰

After explaining the object of his being at Bijaygarh, Kantababu proceeded to give a description of his arrival and the negotiation that was ultimately approved by both Major Popham and the Rani. He was

³⁹Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29205, f. 113.

⁴⁰Ibid., ff. 113—114

himself present and took part in the discussion. The elaborate discussion took place on the 10 November 1781, the day after Kantababu's arrival.

'That agreeably to these Orders, the said Kontoo Baboo went to Bejigur and arrived at the camp of Major Popham at 10 at Night Friday the—9⁴¹ and delivered to him a letter from Major Palmer, That Major Popham read the letter and expressed satisfaction at the arrival of the said Kontoo Baboo, informed him that the Vakeel of the Rani had been with him the day before. That he had sent to her the proposals to which he was disposed to assent, and that the Rani's Vakeel had engaged to return on that day at 12 O'clock, with her answer. That if she consented to those proposals—well. If not, that he should break the Treaty. That said Kontoo Baboo desired permission to send information to the Rani of his arrival, to which the Major assented, and directed a proper person to pass the messenger of the said Kontoo through the different guards and posts. That during the time that his messenger was proceeding to the Rani, the Vakeel of the Rani, accompanied by Chumput Raie, was returning to Major Popham. That the messenger of the said Bauboo, with the Rani's answer to his letter, returned about half an hour after Chumput Raie and the Rani's Vakeel. That the said Chumput Raie informed Major Popham that the Rani approved of the several proposals sent by the Major through the Vakeel, and further said, that if the Major would give his proposals in writing to him he would carry them to the Rani, for the purpose of altering or adding such articles as might be necessary, and that he would return with the treaty finally settled the next day. That Major Popham delivered to Chumput Raie in writing the Articles of Capitulation, which were already prepared, and dismissed him back to the Rani. Kontoo Bauboo further says, that he returned from Major Popham's to his own tent, and that Chumput Raie on his way back to the fort came there also. That at this time, he, Kontoo, received from his messenger, who was before returned from the Rani, her answer to his letter, in which she informed him that her mind was at ease since he was arrived. That she had delivered over the necessary powers to Chumput Raie who was fully authorised to treat proper the business. That she had sent him that day to Major Popham for the purpose, that they would meet, that Chumput Raie would

⁴¹The figure is smudged. But as 9th November 1781 was indeed a Friday, there can be no doubt about the date of arrival. (See Secret Proceedings of 12th Nov, 1781, Monday)

communicate to him the situation of things and that she trusted, he Kontoo Bauboo would take the measures necessary to her being removed with safety and with honour.’⁴²

Now Kantababu relates the incidents of the 10 November 1781. It seems that Rani Panna from the very beginning was apprehensive of the English army. Kantababu and Captain Scott were the only two who enjoyed her confidence. She therefore asked for Kantababu’s presence at Bijaygarh so that her ‘honour and dignity’ did not suffer. It was again this misgiving which made her add the three articles to the treaty of capitulation which assured her safe journey from the fort to her destination. During the first visit of Kantababu to the fort the Rani did not hide her alarm suspecting that once she allowed the gates to be opened, the treaty of capitulation may be flouted by the army. It was under such circumstances that Kantababu assured the Rani, on the pledge on his faith that the articles of the treaty would be respected.

‘That on the next day at 9 in the morning Chumpat Raie, the Vakeel, and three Jummadars from the Fort, came to the tent of Kontoo Bauboo. That Chumpat Raie informed him that the Rani approved of and agreed to the Articles proposed by Major Popham, and that she had added two or three more, on her part for his assent. That the three Jummadars present, had come on their own parts and on the part of the Garrison to secure safe and honourable terms for themselves, as they were apprehensive from the opposition which they had made, that, without such security, they might be subject to future disgrace and danger. That he, Kontoo assured the Jummadars that every security would be granted to them, and that, that business would be done at Major Popham’s, where they now proceeded; Chumpat Raie, the Vakeel and the three Jummadars,—Kontoo Bauboo following himself after a short interval. That on their arrival at Major Popham’s Chumpat Raie informed him in the presence of Captain Scott, that the Rani assented to all the Articles which he had proposed—that she had sent him three additional articles for his assent, and that the Jummadars present had come to obtain security for themselves and the rest of the Garrison—that the Garrison had received some part of their pay, to the amount of two, four, and six rupees per man, which they hoped they would be permitted to carry with them. That Major Popham assented on his part, to the three

⁴²*Brit. Mus., Add. Mss., 29205, f. 114.*

Articles sent by the Rani and gave the necessary assurances to the Jummadars, with respect to their safety, and engaged that the Garrison should not be plundered of their property unless it would exceed the sum of fifteen rupees per man. That he then proposed to Chumpat Raie and the Vakeel, that as the capitulation was now signed and everything concluded, he would send some troops with them, whom they should put in possession of the Fort. That the Vakeel of the Rani proposed in reply that—Captain Scott and Kontoo Baboo with a small party of sepoys, to the number of half a Company should be sent. That he would give the necessary information to the Rani and that a Gate of the Fort should be delivered over to them. Major Popham proposed the sending of Major Crawford, to which the Vakeel assented, but desired that the number of the troops might be that which he had mentioned, and that they might have positive orders not to go up into the Fort. That none of the people would evacuate it on that day but on the next, a part of the Garrison, a part of the Zunnaunah and the Sick would be sent out. That on the following day, the Rani herself with her followers and the remainder of the Garrison would quit the Fort, and the English might then take complete possession. But that there were no conveyance for the women, or carriages for the tents, therefore proposed that Major Popham should send such pallankeens and bearers as he could collect together and also Camels and Elephant to bring down such tents as would be wanting. That Major Popham in reply at first insisted that the fort should be completely evacuated the next day, but that on repetition of their request as to this point on the part of Chumpat Raie and the Vakeel, he consented that the Rani should continue in the Fort till the day following*, promised to send Camels, Elephants, bearers and Pallankeen, and directed that as many of the women and the people as possible, should be sent out on the next day. Added that he should send two or three women for the purpose of searching the Pallankeens as they passed, six Palankeens excepted. Agreeably to Treaty, that he then presented to them Major Crawford** as the Gentleman whom he should send to take possession, with which the Vakeel was satisfied, and requested leave to go before and give the necessary information to the Rani.’

So after the completion of the negotiations three salient points emerge—

* that is upto the 12th November 1781.

** in all probability—Major Moses Crawford.

- (i) Popham gave the Rani time upto the 12 November 1781 to evacuate the Fort.
- (ii) He agreed not to search the Six Palanquins which will bear the Royal ladies.
- (iii) He agreed to find transport such as Palanquins, bearers, Camels or Elephants.

Kantababu's narrative shows that he did not keep any of his pledges.

'That he (the Vakil) went accordingly and was followed almost immediately by Major Crawford, Captain Scott, Kontoo Bauboo and Chumpat Raie, the Sepoys for this service being already at an advance post at the foot of the Hill. That near the foot of the Hill they overtook the Vakeel of the Rani, and proceeding on, about half way up the Hill, at near a place called Bhimaputter, they came up with the detachment consisting, said Kontoo Bauboo, supposes, of about 250 Europeans and 500 Sepoys. That the troops were halted, part on the road below and part on the spot called Bhimaputter and that Major Crawford, Captain Scott and other Officers to the number of twelve or fourteen, proceeded together with Kontoo Bauboo, Chumpat Raie and the Rani's Vakeel proceeded onward from thence, on foot, when they were met by a person from the Rani, who informed Major Crawford, that she was alarmed at the number of the troops, who had advanced to Bhimaputter, and turning to Kontoo Bauboo said, "the Rani desires that you will first come to her and unattended." That he, Kontoo Bauboo asked Major Crawford if he approved of his going—and that on receiving his assent he proceeded to the Fort. Major Crawford and other Officers halting at the spot where they were met by the messenger of the Rani.'

Thus Kantababu went into the Fort alone. 'That he passed on through the three gates which led into the Fort, which were again shut as soon as he entered, and that within the third gate he found Ruggoobeer Diaul and Doonda Bakut waiting for him on the part of the Rani. That they repeated what the messenger had before said that the Rani was alarmed at the number of troops approaching, and added that the Sepoys were advancing toward the wicket gate, which she supposed might be with an intention to scale the wall. That he, Kontoo Bauboo assured them that the Rani might set her mind at rest, that no clandestine attempt would be made, as they apprehend at the other gate. That he would speak to Major Crawford and cause those people to be ordered back. That according to agreement, two Officers

and a small body of men would take possession of the Gates and the rest of the troops would remain on the road without the first Gate and at Bhimaputtur. That they said they would communicate what he had said to the Rani and received her Orders, and Ruggoobeer Diaul went to the Rani for that purpose. That he returned with a message from the Rani to the said Kontoo Baboo expressive of her apprehensions, and a desire to know whether he himself, was perfectly convinced that the Treaty would be adhered to. That he gave them the most positive assurance that he was, and advised them to open the Gates, but finding that they were still apprehensive and not disposed to comply with his advice, he proposed that Ruggoobeer Diaul should go with him to Major Crawford, from whom he would receive a confirmation of the upright intentions of the English. That they went accordingly and that after much conversation it was agreed between Major Crawford, Captain Scott and Ruggoobeer Diaul that said Major Crawford and Captain Scott, with two other Officers, at the head of fifty men should take possession of the Gates and the rest of the troops should remain without the first Gate and at Bhimaputtur. That Ruggoobeer Diaul returned to the Rani to inform her of what had passed and that Major Crawford expressing some doubts respecting his return, he Kontoo Bauboo, sent after him, one of his own people in whom he could confide, to accompany him to the Rani, to hear what past between them and to return with her determination. That the person sent by Kontoo Bauboo returned with a man of the Rani's, who was authorised to deliver up the Gates on receiving a satisfactory answer to the following message and questions from the Rani to Kontoo Bauboo, "Whether he would take upon himself and pledge his religion and his faith, that the articles of the treaty should be adhered to, that her honour should be preserved, and that he and Captain Scott would continue with her while she remained in the Fort and afterwards until she should reach Benares?" That he, Kontoo Bauboo, pledged his faith for the due performance of the foregoing and that the Gates were opened accordingly. That Major Crawford, Captain Scott and all the Officers who were with them also Chumpat Raie, the Vakeel and Kontoo Bauboo passed into the third or last Gate with about fifty Sepoys, but did not enter the Fort. That Guards were immediately stationed at all the Gates—and that the Officer with Major Crawford continued there all night, Major Crawford, Captain Scott and four or five other Gentlemen under the third or uppermost Gateway and the rest at the other two. That the Guards were directed to permit no one to enter or go out of the Fort without an order from Major Crawford.'

As the night fell Major Crawford adopted a stern attitude, Kantababu relates, 'Chumpat Raie and the Vakeel passed into the Fort, and that he, Kantoo Bauboo applied to Major Crawford and Captain Scott for permission to pass also, agreeably to the desire of the Rani. That his request was refused and that he was obliged to continue for the remainder of that day and the succeeding night, without any refreshment, and with no other bed than the Chaharpaue of a common peon, under the gateway, exposed to the sharp air of the night and without even water to drink, for that some water which had been procured by his servants was taken away by the Serjeant of the Guards.'⁴³

Explaining his complaints later to Hastings who asked for his written reply, Kantababu wrote, '(a) His request (to enter the Fort) was refused by Major Crawford, who said it was unnecessary; that he must stay with him. Captain Scott wished that he, Kontoo, should go into the Fort. That Kontoo repeated his request two or three times to Major Crawford, but without success. (b) It was about an hour and a half after the departure of Chumpat Raie and the Vakeel that he made the above applications, that from that period he did not repeat them, he supposed it to be in vain as Major Crawford had said, he must continue with them, that for the foregoing reason he did not, at any time, during that interval, apply for permission to return,' (c) Kantababu said 'that the water was not taken away by the Serjeant, but that it was rendered useless to him by the Serjeant, who, as it came from within the Fort, supposed that it might contain something of value, and therefore took the vessel into his hands to examine it, and then let it pass. Major Crawford was asleep.'⁴⁴

On the same night, the 10 November 1781 as the sign of the occupation of the Fort, the English flag was hoisted and information was sent to Major Popham who immediately informed the Governor General that 'about twelve O'clock in the night the Grenadier took possession of the Western Gate of Bijeegur after the Rhanee had played with and deceived them from ten O'clock in the morning when she agreed to give up the Fort.'⁴⁵

The fateful day of the 11 November 1781 dawned, it was Sunday. Kantababu had taken his station near the gateway, the night before.

⁴³Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29205, f. 114-118.

⁴⁴Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29205, f. 120-121.

⁴⁵Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29151, ff. 292-293.

When the Gentlemen had fixed their colours on the walls and returned out of the Fort, he set forth his situation to them, which was, according to his reply to Hastings, made to Major Crawford, Kantababu said that he twice applied to him for permission to enter the Fort only to perform his ablutions to which the Major made no reply, that he some minutes after made the application as mentioned in the narrative and received the answer as there written, from Major Crawford. Kantababu's narrative continues, 'That he had passed the night in great distress without any refreshment or convenience whatever, and requested, as he was not permitted to remain in the Fort that he might be allowed to return to his tents. That he was told in reply (by Major Crawford), "It was well—he might go out." That he returned to the foot of the hills and Captain Scott also. That about half after ten in the morning, he went to Major Popham's where he was informed that the Gentlemen's Pallankeens and bearers had been sent for the conveyance of the Zunnannah together with three elephants and two camels for baggage. That he informed Major Popham that the Rani had sent for him, but that Major Crawford, notwithstanding the application of the Rani, would not permit him to enter the Fort. That the Rani and her followers, who had previously stipulated that he, Kontoo Bauboo, should continue with them as long as they stayed in the Fort, were greatly alarmed and terrified at their apparent unprotected situation, and that he thought it his duty to communicate these particulars to him, Major Popham. That the Major directed him to go to his tent, said he 'would write a note to the Commanding Officer in the Fort, who in consequence thereof would undoubtedly give him admittance, and that as soon as the answer came he would send for him.'⁴⁶

The report that Popham received from the Commanding Officer of the Fort elated him and he immediately sent information to Hastings, 'I have the pleasure to inform you that the Fort is now securely in our possession. The women are coming out, as fast as conveyance can carry them to the places they may chuse (sic) to reside in for the present.

'From the performance of the Rhanee's agreement and other circumstances, I have reason to believe that she was not to blame in the delay, but it was occasioned by the distrusts of Dunda Buggut, the Dewan, at least every person in the Fort attributed to him and I think

⁴⁶Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29205, ff. 118.

but justice to mention it to you. As the Agreement with the Rhanee was signed and negotiations were not broken off, I think it ought to be fulfilled tho' the delay on her part would have warranted severity; but for the reality of this, I beg leave to refer you to Cantoo Baboo, whose knowledge of the Natives must enable him to judge better on the subject.'⁴⁷

This was an advanced report as neither were the transport ready nor were the women coming out.

After paying a tribute to the Governor's Dewan, Major Popham sent for him and asked him to go up to the Fort at one O'clock in the afternoon. Kantababu's narrative gives a picture of the incidents. 'That Major Popham sent for him about one O'clock and told him to go directly to the Fort. That he (Kantababu) expressed his apprehension that without a Note, he would not obtain admittance—in reply to which the Major said that the note which he had already wrote was sufficient—but on a repetition of his doubts that the Guards at the Gates would not permit him to pass, he directed an orderly Sepoy to accompany him—and that he set out towards the Fort.

'That at a short distance he came to the place where the Elephants and the Camels were waiting, and was told by the people that they had continued there from the morning without provender* (sic) and without water, and that neither the tents or other necessities had been sent down from the Fort. That he told them when he had got into the Fort, he would send them directions. That he went on and about half way up the hill was met by people evacuating the Fort, weeping and bewailing their situation.' Answering question (f) of Hastings, Kantababu later explained that these were 'men, women and children of the inferior sort; peadahs, female servants belonging to the women, and their families.' Kantababu's narrative continues, 'That the little necessities which had been remitted to them by the Officers had been all taken away by the Sepoys, and that they had not left even a cloth to cover them.' This was the beginning of the tale of licentiousness, rapine and plunder by the soldiers of the helpless women and inhabitants of the Bijaygarh Fort. 'That he saw several of the Sepoys in the very act of plundering those poor people; that some of

⁴⁷Ibid., Add. Mss. 29151, ff. 298-299.

* Probably 'provisions'.

them were spared at his request, but they were immediately followed and plundered by others as soon as he had passed. That proceeding on, he met the conveyances of the women just without the Fort. That there was a guard of four Sepoys to protect the wife of Chate Sing, but that all the rest of the women and attendants were without any guard or protection whatsoever. That on seeing him the women, with one voice, complained of the cruel treatment they had received. That such had been the dishonour they had suffered, female modesty would not permit them to describe it. Says that with the elephants etc. Major Popham had sent three women for the purpose of searching the conveyances of the females. That after they had made the search and passed the Pallankeens, Doolies etc., that they were again stopt and plundered at the gates, by the Europeans and Sepoys, who with their own hands stripped them of the few Ornaments that remained, and even tore their clothes from their backs, leaving them destitute of covering. That the same treatment was used toward all the women, and that he himself saw Attul Sing, the brother of Muncur Sing, and Alland Misseer and Ruggoobeer Diaul, coming out of the Fort bareheaded, who told him that the people had taken their turbans from their heads. That when he came near the first gate, two persons seized him by the hands and forced him along. That there was a European (or Sergeants) guard at the gate, and that the business of that European was to stop the Meanahs and Doolies of the women and examine them. That while he was searching on one side of the Meanahs, his Sepoys were plundering on the other. That upon his, Kontoo Bauboo's, being brought to this man, he flew into a violent passion, and when he said that Major Popham had sent one of his orderlies with him, and that he would go into the Fort, that he was still more enraged and abused him with the grossest language. That his Sepoys raised the butt ends of their pieces to strike his people and at last threatened to strike him. That unable to resist and seeing nothing but insult before him, he determined to return to Major Popham. That throughout the whole road the business of rapine and plunder was going on, and the cries and lamentations were unceasing. That the wife of Chate Sing, and Bisshun Koour, the second wife of late Balwund Singh*, sent to inform him of their extreme distress. That they had been used in a manner that decency would not permit them to describe. That they had been deprived of the most common necessities, and that they were destitute and totally unprotected.'

* Bulwunt Singh, father of Chait Singh.

Ultimately Kantababu's remonstrance with Major Popham brought some relief. 'That in consequence of this information, he sent with the permission of Major Popham, twelve troopers and their duffahdar to protect them, and that the Major afterwards sent twenty more. That they continued that day at Dehwandroulⁱ. That Rani Panna remained alone still in the Fort. That according to agreement she was to have continued there till the next day, but that not attending to this circumstance, they put her into a Choupauleh and sent her out. That she joined her companions, and the next morning sent for a Kullindureeⁱⁱ etc. etc. which belonged to her and that Captain Scott sent them a Beehobeh. That he, Kantoo Bauboo, applied to Major Popham for carpets etc. That the Major promised to send as many as he could procure, and directed him in the meantime to go to them, to quiet and allay their apprehensions.'

Thus ended the day and night of horror. Popham though belatedly tried to give some protection to the ladies. It was not till the next morning, the 12 November 1781 that the tents could be made available to the ladies and Kantababu relates, 'that about half after ten O'clock the women quitted their meanahs and doolies, where they had continued a great part of the preceding day and the whole night, and entered the tent. That there was not even the usual bedding in the Meanahs etc., where they had been so confined. That Major Popham afterwards sent a large tent and three smaller ones, two Suttringeesⁱⁱⁱ and a carpet, and that these, with those which he had sent, were all the accommodations they had. That they had neither brass utensils to dress the Victuals, nor clothes to change except those they had on. That on the next day each of the women, agreeably to the orders of Major Popham sent a person into the Fort to point out the property of each. That when they did so, the Major (answering question (h) of Hastings, Kantababu later replied that this was Major Crawford) asked how it could be expected that so much should be given up? But added, what was necessary and proper should be sent the next day, and some bags of clothes for the women and brass utensils were sent accordingly'.

'That on Wednesday^{iv} he went to inform Major Popham that they

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- (i) Dhandraul, a place 4 miles from the Fort at the foot of the hills.
 - (ii) A sort of doolie.
 - (iii) Cotton carpets locally made.
 - (iv) 14th November 1781.

were detained for want of bearers, and on the Thursday the Major sent bearers and also camels and elephants to carry the tents and baggage, That Captain Scott^v sent directions for them to march and that (he) would follow and overtake them. That he (Kantababu) moved forward with the Zennauneh on Friday, and was overtaken on Saturday by Captain Scott at Sumreah, and proceeded from thence, on that day to Mudhoopour. On the next to Ahroureh^{vi} and on the same day about half after four in the afternoon the Rani and her companions etc. in a most wretched state, were lodged in the Mehal of Kaumcheha in the city of Benares. That they were obliged to use earthen pots for dressing their victuals, the necessaries given back to them being still on board the boats, for want of places to secure them in. That the numerous followers of the Rani suffered greatly for want of accommodation.'

The severe nights of the winter only added to the discomfort of the refugees. Kantababu, 'says that Captain Scott had sent them five or six pairs of shauls which were a great relief to them. Said Kantoo further adds, that Attaul Sing told him when the Zunnahneh was plundered, one of the Europeans asked him, to give him one of the women, that this circumstance reaching the ears of Major Crawford, he chastized the soldier with his cane and set the women at liberty.'⁴⁸

The narrative apparently ends here but not without an enigma. Between the last part of the quoted narrative and the beginning of the written answers to the questions raised by Hastings, there is a gap of a page number 17, which does not exist. Dr. Marshall opined, 'There is no page 17 in the manuscript. So it is either lost or the person who did the numbering made a mistake.'⁴⁹ There is no doubt that the narrative is complete, but as the last few lines are occupied in relating the anecdotes of the plunder, the missing of the page cannot also be ruled out.

Kantababu did not spare any pains for the safe journey of the ladies of Chait Singh's household. He accompanied them throughout the strenuous journey which started on Thursday, the 15 November 1781,

(v) This Captain Scott later became better known as Major Scott Waring, though his earlier name was Captain John Scott and was Hastings' aide-de-camp for some time. (Grier p. 67).

(vi) Present name Ahraura—26 miles from Benaras by the modern road.

⁴⁸Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29205, ff. 118-121.

⁴⁹A personal letter to the biographer who remains indebted to Dr. P. J. Marshall for finding the manuscript and sending a copy to him.

ending only in the safe lodging of the Ranees at Benaras on Sunday, the 18 November 1781. Even before starting the journey he addressed a letter to Raja Mahipnarain of Benaras which demonstrates his sense of responsibility and a clear idea of practical necessity. He wrote on 14 November from the village of Dhandraul. 'To Raja Mahip Narayan, an arjee from Diwan Kishan Kanta'. 'Has this day received an arjee from Diwan Kishan Kanta to the effect that the relations of Chait Singh have come down from the Fort (Bijaygarh) and are stranded at the village of Dhandraul for want of kâhars and begârs.* He should therefore immediately despatch 200 kâhars and 100 begârs with 40 littres and one tent to assist them in reaching their destination in safety.'⁵⁰

While Kantababu was trying to organise the journey which would take the relations of Chait Singh from the tents of Dhandraul to the safety of a civilised town and a brick built house, the plunder of the Fort went on unabated.

Popham's letter to Hastings written on the 12 November 1781, when read after the narrative of Kantababu, appears both hypocritical and full of untruthful innovations. Popham had to find some excuse for the deplorable behaviour of his commanders and soldiers. A scapegoat was also necessary to retain the prestige of the army. Popham never realised that Kantababu may be giving a full report of the incidents. His letter therefore is found to be a twisted report of facts. He pleaded the difficulty of protecting the Rani and her companions as they started to vacate the Fort on the night of the 10th, though in actual fact they were forced to come out of the Fort not before the early hours of the 11th. He also writes about the apprehension of treachery which prompted his commanders to stern action. This argument does not hold water either, as during the siege of the Bijaygarh Fort not a shot was fired from the opposite side, rather it was Popham again who was planning to breach the Fort wall by the use of a mine. It is clear therefore that inordinate greed made the army act as they did, which was the result of the several letters that Hastings wrote to Popham. Hastings always mentioned the Fort with its treasures and Popham interpreted this as if Hastings had given permission to plunder the Fort and divide the treasure amongst themselves.

⁵⁰ Calendar of Persian Records. Vol. VI. p. 109. Cl. 13, pp. 39-40, No. 52.

* menials who worked as carriers.

Popham's letter to Hastings. 12th November, Camp Bijeegaur

'I did myself the Honour, the day before yesterday, to inform you of the Surrender of this place and the Situation of Affairs at the time.

The Rhannee came out of the Fort with her family and Dependents, the 10th at Night owing to which such attention was not paid to her as I wished; and I am exceedingly sorry to inform you that the Licentiousness of our Followers was beyond the Bounds of Control, for notwithstanding all I could do, her people were Plundered on the Road of most of the things which they brought out of the Fort, by which means one of the Articles of Surrender has been much infringed. The Distress I have felt upon this occasion cannot be expressed, and can only be allayed by a firm Performance of the Other Articles of Treaty, which I shall make it my Business to enforce.

The Suspicion which the Officers had of Treachery and the Delay made, to our getting possession, had enraged them as well as the Troops so much, that the Treaty was regarded void; but this determination was soon succeeded by Pity and Compassion for the unfortunate besieged.

The women are now in tents at a little distance from the Camp, with proper safeguard, and I have sent into the Fort for those conveniencies which are necessary to their situation; and the Rhannee will have her share of Fifteen percent exactly paid to her. She will remain here until such time as bearers and carriages can be produced to convey her to Benaras where she wishes to reside, but she earnestly begs that she may not be dependent on the Old Rhannee, the new Rajah or Oussaun Sing. She tells me that she has a House at Benares (that I believe in which the Nabob Saadut Ally now lives), also another at Gungapur, about a cose* from the City. Both these she hopes for, from your indulgence and for future support, she most humbly submits to your Generosity. Cantoo Baboo is with the Rhannee, and as she has particularly requested that Captain Scott may pitch his Tent near hers, and accompany on her way to Benares, I have consented and he will move accordingly. .

I have to request that you will give orders for such a number of bearers and coolies as can be collected, to be sent here immediately to conduct the Rhannee and her family etc. who are in all about three hundred women besides children. Thirty or forty cupolas will also be necessary; and if some Bazar is likewise sent, it will make the journey perfectly convenient. I shall furnish a sufficient escort. Every means is

* a cose is two miles.

taking (sic-taken) to procure Bearers here but I fear, this Country will afford but very few, on which account I hope many will come from Benares.

'Dhounda Buggut may justly be said to have occasioned the Rhannee's sufferings, as he caused the Delay, in the Surrender of the Fort, Bogwisdial the Buxey on the contrary acted with the greatest Honour, and should he survive the fever he is now ill of, I think he will merit the Attention of the Government. Chumput Roy also demands praise for the suffering which his Attachment to our Government had drawn on him. He is likewise with the Rhannee.

I have the honour etc. Wm. Popham.'⁵¹

Hastings could not but be very much concerned about the report and wrote back from Chunar on 14 November 1781, 'It gives me great concern that the Licentiousness of any Person under your Command should have given cause to complain of the infringement of the smallest articles of Capitulation in favour of the mother of Cheyt Singh and her dependents. I hope you will discover the offenders, and oblige them to make Restitution, and also punish them in the most exemplary manner.'⁵² It is quite clear from this letter that Hastings did not realise the enormity of the situation till he had heard of it from Kantababu, who must have most certainly at the behest of the Governor General reduced his narrative to writing.

Popham's now famous letter to Hastings written on 16 November 1781 from 'Camp Bijeeghur' established the Major in his true colours. He alleged that by his letter of 22 October 1781, Hastings had given them the right to plunder the Fort. That letter acted as a lever in the mind of Popham who wanted that all negotiations should fail so that the defenceless Fort having three hundred women and countless children could be stormed. His feeling was so open that it seeped through his Commanders and infused the soldiers, who felt that they could do whatever they liked with the Fort, its treasures and inhabitants. Notwithstanding the Treaty of Capitulation, Popham sprung the mine, breaching the Fort and then stormed it while one of its main gates were being handed over peacefully

⁵¹ Minutes of Evidence taken at the Trial of Warren Hastings, Esquire (1785), p. 281-292.

⁵² Ibid.

to Major Crawford. This letter establishes the most un-soldier-like behaviour of Popham.⁵³

The apprehensions of Rani Panna seem to be well founded. Except Kantababu and Captain Scott none else enjoyed her confidence. She expected that the presence of the Governor's Dewan would safeguard her 'honour and dignity'. It was again this misgiving which led her to add three further articles to the treaty of Capitulation, which assured her safe journey from the Fort to her destination. Even during the first visit of Kantababu inside the Fort, when he was met by Dounda Bhagat and Raghubir Dayal, the Rani was alarmed, whether the treaty would be fully adhered to. It was Kantababu who assured the Rani on the pledge of his faith that the articles of the treaty would be respected. Kantababu never expected the turn of events that followed his assurances.

The Rani could have offered resistance. Major Belfour said in course of the cross examination before the Select Committee that, 'Bidjeygur stood out a siege of six weeks; and in it we found a great quantity of ammunition of all kinds and a great quantity of grain sufficient for the garrison (between two to three thousand men both horse and foot) for three or four years.'⁵⁴ The massive Fort did present the difficulty of storming because of its sheer physical situation. Without treachery, therefore, it was not easy to lay hands on the Fort and its treasures. The consideration of the Rani of not offering resistance was because of the presence of the large number of women and children. She was therefore truly eager for a peaceful vacation of the Fort and considered that the presence of the Governor's Banian would ensure adherence to the treaty of Capitulation. She hesitated in leaving the Fort as she was greatly suspicious of the real motive of the English army under Popham.

The Rani's fears turned out to be just. The narrative describes the inhuman plunder and rapine that took place. Even the members of the royal family were not spared. The wife of Raja Chait Singh, who was considered to be a great beauty of the time and as such was particularly protected and Beshan Kaur, the second wife of Bulwant Singh, complained that, 'they had been used in a manner, that decency would not permit to describe.' Burke spoke rightly of the 'helpless

⁵³ Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29151, ff., 337-341.

⁵⁴ Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee of the House of Commons being a Committee of the whole House (John Stockdale 1786) Part III. p. 37.

defenceless women.’⁵⁵ Burke was at his best regarding the ‘Bijoygarh Affairs’, he said, ‘In this disgraceful affair the soldiers showed a generosity which Mr. Hastings neither showed nor would have suffered. They agreed amongst themselves to give these women three lacs rupees and some trifle more; and the rest was divided as a prey among the army. The sum found in the Fort was about £238,000, not the smallest part of which was in any way proved to be Cheyt Singh’s property, or the property of any person but the unfortunate women who were found in possession of it.’⁵⁶ During the Parliamentary debates of 13 June 1786, it was said about the wealth of this Fort that, ‘in the castle Bidgigur were found besides what possibly had been conveyed away privately at least 23 lakhs of rupees in specie, Rs. 23,27,818 according to article III of the Impeachment (part III No. XXI), and jewels and other moveables to the value of a core and a half of Rupees.’⁵⁷ It is certain that Burke did not know about the existence of the narrative of Kantababu, otherwise he would not have said : ‘A month had been allowed by proclamation for the submission of all persons who had been in rebellion, which submission was to entitle them to endemnity. But my Lords, he (Hastings) endeavoured to break the public faith with these women; by inciting the soldiers to make no capitulation with them, and thus depriving them the benefit of the proclamation, by preventing their voluntary surrender.’⁵⁸ Hastings marked the narrative and then asked eight questions which were answered by Kantababu.⁵⁹ The narrative would not have helped Hastings during the Impeachment, rather it could have implicated him further if it could be proved that Popham’s callous neglect in adhering to the Treaty of Capitulation was a direct outcome of the several letters from Hastings, particularly that of 22 October. Even without the knowledge of the ‘narrative’, this was exactly the contention that Burke tried to prove. Hastings can be considered lucky that the accusations ultimately could not be upheld because of lack of evidence which the ‘narrative’ would have certainly provided.

There can be no doubt about the fact that Hastings wanted to keep the ‘narrative’ unknown which remained undated amongst his papers. He did not use it in his own ‘Narrative of the Insurrection of Banaris’

⁵⁵Burke’s Works. Vol. XI, p. 297 (Huntington Ed.).

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 295.

⁵⁷The Debate on the Charge: relating to Mr. Hastings’ conduct to Cheyt Singh at Benaras in the House of Commons on 13th June 1786 (John Stockdale. 1786), p. 21.

⁵⁸Burke’s Works. Vol. XI. op. Cit. p. 294.

⁵⁹Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29205, f. 122.

nor added this important document in his appendices. He gave a description of the Fort. 'Bidjeygur is a Fort erected on solid rock of a hill rising to the height of 745 perpendicular feet from the level ground. It lies about fifty miles from Chunar in the South-West direction.' He praised Popham unreservedly saying that he 'had the peculiar credit of having surmounted all obstacles...to the conquest of two of the fortresses of Hindoostan which had been before universally deemed impregnable.'⁶⁰ The Appendix Sixth Parcel (Num. VI B) merely contains two depositions from 'Contoo Doss' sworn before Sir Elijah Impey on the 2 and 5 December 1781 on unimportant matters. The book was published in 1782 and Kantababu received the Jageer of Ballia in Gazipur District the same year. So it is possible that Kantababu agreed to forget about the narrative. But the incidents became too well known. One is amazed to find the truth of the stories that were circulating from generation to generation about the sack of Bijaygarh with the narrative of Kantababu, the existence of which had remained hitherto unknown.* The circulating stories merely put the incidents at Benaras, where it was one big battle with Chait Singh, ending with the occupation of the fort (of Benaras or Shiwala Ghat) by Hastings himself. It is strange to find that the episode is least contaminated by hyperboles even almost two hundred years after the incident.

The letter of Hastings to Major Scott written on the 21 February 1782 from Fort William, Calcutta, to London may be considered to be his personal view regarding the affairs of Bijaygarh. 'I have said nothing to you yet concerning the Bidjeygur prize money. It has given me infinite uneasiness, and I am no less mortified at the rapacity which the officers of Major Popham's corps have shown on that occasion than at my public disappointment. I had not the shadow of a suspicion that Popham would have taken any decided step in a matter of such concern without an authority from me, especially as I was so near. Judge, of my astonishment when I tell you that the distribution of the plunder was begun before I knew that the place was in possession, and finished before I knew that it was begun. A very uncandid advantage was taken of a private letter written by me to Major Popham on another occasion during the heat of the siege, at which time I made it a point to answer all his letters on the instant of their receipt, and generally by another hand, and often in the

⁶⁰Warren Hastings, *Narrative of Insurrection of Banaris*, p. 45 & 53.

* Published by the biographer for the first time in the *Bengal Past and Present*, July-December 1970 (Vol. LXXXIX. Part II Serial No. 168. pp. 293-304) and July-December 1971 (Vol. XC. Part II. Serial No. 170. pp. 217-223).

most familiar style. The fact is that, instead of receiving my letters as authority, they were afraid that I should stop or qualify the distribution, and therefore precipitated it to prevent me. I referred the matter to the Board, but they chose to wait my return, and we have since publicly called upon the sharers to refund, and submit their pretensions wholly to our decision. If they refuse, I shall propose to try whether the law may not compel them. Popham's fault in the business was want of resolution, and he was avowed that he could not withstand the universal clamour and vehemence of his officers for the scramble.

'The Officers sent a very elegant sword as a present to me, and a set of dressing boxes for Mrs. Hastings, all beautifully inlaid with jewels: I returned them all.'⁶¹

Hastings however kept a keen eye on the movement of Chait Singh and Dounda Bhagat, the Dewan of the Rani, who seemed to have left Benaras for some unknown destination. Hastings noted that Chait Singh ultimately reached the court of Scindia in Gwalior, who gave daily promises of help but drained him of his riches and men. Anderson from Bandere reported on 1 January 1782, 'that his (the Sindia's) feelings are extremely hurt at the idea of turning him out and that he rather wishes Chait Singh despairing of all success through his means, may be induced to depart of himself.'⁶² Hastings' concern about Chait Singh is expressed in a letter to Nizam Ally Khan on 31 March 1782, 'There is no doubt that had he (Cheyt Sing) possessed courage and abilities equal to the wickedness of his intentions, he might easily, had God permitted it, have effected my personal destruction.'⁶³ This was indeed a far cry from the time when Hastings presented Raja Chait Singh on July 1773 the following : he gave a present of one Khelat containing 5 pieces, a pair of Jegah, a Sherpatch, one elephant (cost Rs. 3675) and one horse (cost Rs. 630), the total cost coming to Rs. 6249-8-0. This expense was not charged to the Company's account, but was paid by Hastings personally.⁶⁴ Regarding Dounda Bhagat, Hastings received information on 28 September 1784 and noted in his Diary A, his remark against the informa-

⁶¹G. R. Gleig, ed. *Memoirs of the Life of the Right Hon. Warren Hastings*. (1841), pp. 428-429.

⁶²*Brit. Mus., Add. Mss.*, 29152, ff. 264-267.

⁶³*Ibid.*, *Add. Mss.* 29153, ff. 529-531.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, *Add. Mss.* 29195, ff. 140-141.

tion is rather funny as he writes merely the cryptic note 'of Doonda Buggut, correge-staten-entio-bio'. Sept 29—No Amritta Moon.'⁶⁵

The narrative of Kantababu therefore sets forth a report of the incidents which were largely unknown. He was the only Indian of some importance in the victor's side. His report is factual without recourse to sentiment or partiality. Even the ill treatment he himself received at the hands of the soldiers is rationally described. The narrative shows the urgency of Major Popham for the fall of the Fort; the callousness of Major Crawford in adhering to the articles of the treaty; the lust of the soldiers for the riches of the Fort, which they believed would be theirs; and the irresponsibility of the Officers who unleashed the common soldiers 'to the indiscriminate plunder and rapine' that followed.

Kantababu stands out as the man of principle. Through heavy odds he performed his duty and put the Rani and her family safely in a house in Benaras. His faith in the English must have been very much shaken by the Bijaygarh incident. Both aged (he was about 61 years at the time) and infirm in body, he must have been sick in mind also when he saw that 'throughout the whole road the business of rapine and plunder was going on, and the cries and lamentations were unceasing.' No doubt he retired to the head-quarters and was therefore not found with Hastings either in Ayodhya or in the South.

The postscript of the Bijaygarh affair is almost as interesting. Rani Panna was a Baisnab or a worshipper of Bisnu in a household which was fully Saivite. Panna was allowed to worship her own deity, which was an auspicious *shila* (stone form) of the rarest variety. Probably this Baisnabite worship created a fraternity between Panna and Kanta Babu during the flight from Benaras in August 1781. When interned at Bijaygarh, Kantababu, a devout Baisnab must have established a rapport with the Rani. After the sack of Bijaygarh, the Rani came out with the deity in her person. Later she did not feel safe and apprehended a further attack by the soldiers upon herself and her family. It was under such circumstances that she gave the deity to Kantababu, who promised to look after the daily worship himself. Along with the deity several auspicious materials sacred to the Hindu Baisnab were also handed over to Kantababu. Panna and the ladies of her family each presented an

⁶⁵Ibid., Add. Mss. 39879, (Amrita-nectar) ff. 43-44.
(A time of the moon according to Hindu almanac)

ornament of her person as a parting gift to the deity, whose blessings they considered was responsible for their safe journey.

Kantababu therefore took the deity, Sri Sri Laxminarayan Jiew Deva Thakur to his home at Cossimbazar and established the daily *puja* and worship. In course of a few months he made his first Will and Testament in which the main clause was the regular worship of the deity. He earmarked a large income annually from his Kantanagar Pargana which would be spent exclusively for the worship of the deity by his descendants.

Kantababu was also told that as he was not a plunderer of Chait Singh's riches, he should erect a part of Rani Panna's house as her successor and worship the deity as a devotee. So he went back to Benaras and dismantled a stone structure from the Zenana Mahal of the Benaras Palace at Shiwala Ghat and erected it in the front of his house at Cossimbazar proudly calling it Chait Singh's house (Chate Sing's dalan). This is actually two rectangular structures, one measuring 67'6" \times 36'6", having 36 finely carved Chunarstone pillars, seven carved arches, two ante rooms each measuring 20' \times 13'6" and an inner hall of 67'6" \times 16'6". The other measuring 36'6" \times 38' generally known as the *Chautara* or the square, made of Chunar stone with beautifully carved railings on all the sides, which was placed according to the old custom in front of the *dalan*.

Kantababu never forgot his experience at Bijaygarh and worshipped the deity devotedly. Not being entirely satisfied with the arrangement, he created a religious trust with the Ballia Jageer of Ghazipur discussed earlier, on the 1 May 1793, having his son and a representative from each of the family of his brothers signing as witnesses. This interesting document will be further discussed later in detail, in Chapter six, when the social-religious involvement of Kantababu would be taken up.

The outcome of Bijaygarh became extremely important in the life of Kantababu. The estate he established became semi-religious. At the time of his death he left an annual income of 5 Lakhs of Rupees in his secular property, but the income of the religious estate was already one lakh of Rupees. Like a devoted Baisnab Kantababu and all those who came after him believed that the deity had chosen to come to stay in the house of Kantababu out of His own gracious will and the family was

supremely blessed to be chosen to perform the duty of caring for the auspicious deity.

If the Bijaygarh affair was merely a tragic incident comparable to the bubbles of time, its outcome shaped the idealism of a family which rose to the greatest heights of piety and charity in the next two hundred years. The way that the property remained intact and increased both its income and territory could be easily interpreted as the blessings of the deity. In two hundred years the Cossimbazar Raj Estate never faced any division, nor was it affected by the vices which generally follow the accumulation of riches. This miraculous integrity has been not unnaturally, considered to be the graciousness of the deity who came to the house of Kantababu as a direct result of what happened at the Bijaygarh Fort on the 10 and 11 November 1781.

CHAPTER V

CONNECTION WITH EUROPEANS

Kantababu had connections with the Europeans quite early in life. The growing importance of Cossimbazar, the city of his birth, as a busy port in lower Bengal with established company organisations of three different European countries, flourished with his age. As his father had already started business with the English company, Kantababu did not have any other choice. The other communities doing business were the Armenians and the Danes. Kantababu sometimes did business with the former who were also the friends of the English. The importance of Cossimbazar increased further as political manoeuvring started. The political situation was making the English stronger. The battle of Plassey in June 1757 left them as the guardians and protectors of the Nawab. After the "Revolution" as it was called by the English at the time, Kantababu greatly improved his financial status. Hastings being the chief of Cossimbazar, meant additional prestige to him.

He had been in the meantime advancing money to the various company servants and gentlemen at the Durbar, consolidating his position by establishing himself favourably. These advances of money were never of such an amount to be called unusual. Helping out the young assistants became a part of the duty of the Banian to the chief. As the ledger of 1176 (1769-70) is the earliest record available it is not possible to know what happened before this date. This ledger has been dealt in detail in Chapter Six of Volume I and need not be repeated here. It will be sufficient to point out that Kantababu in 1769-70 had some sort of relations with 14 Europeans, all of whom were Company servants and Englishmen. He had direct contact with the following:—

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Richard Barwell | —2nd at Cossimbazar Factory |
| 2. Gerard Gustavas Ducarel . | —The Persian translator at the Durbar |
| 3. Dr. David Redman | —Surgeon attached to the Cossimbazar Factory |
| 4. Charles Hutchison Purling | —Assistant at the Cossimbazar Factory |

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| 5. Thomas Henchman | — -do- -do- -do- |
| 6. William Rooke | —Assistant of the Durbar |
| 7. William Redfearn | — -do- -do- -do- |
| 8. Nicholas Grueber | —3rd at Cossimbazar Factory |
| 9. Lewis Pitchet | —Assistant at -do- -do- |
- The five other Englishmen referred to in the ledger are :—
- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 10. Francis Sykes | —Resident to the Durbar |
| 11. T. S. Hancock | —Company's Surgeon and old trading partner of Hastings |
| 12. William Aldersey | —Chief at Cossimbazar |
| 13. William Thackeray | —Company servant |
| 14. Clude Russell | —Governor's Councillor. |

The conclusion that can be drawn from this ledger¹ is that Kantababu was fairly well known to the heads of the Company and had close association with the Company servants living in Cossimbazar.

The next information comes from the business ledger of 1180 (1773-74) which has also been discussed in detail in Chapter Five of Volume I of this book. In 1180 also, it is found that 15 Europeans were involved in the silk business of Kantababu. Of the fifteen all, except one, were British and Company servants, more or less the circumstances were similar to 1176. The other was an Armenian. Here it is found that the financial transactions were heavier than four years ago. As a business ledger the involvements have been directly accounted so there is almost no mention of casual European names. It should also be noted that of the nine Europeans of 1769-70, eight were continuing their business transactions with Kantababu. Only the name of Nicholas Grueber is missing from the new list. The European names found in the ledger of 1180 (1773-74) are the following :—

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Warren Hastings | —Governor General |
| 2. Samuel Middleton | —Chief at Cossimbazar |
| 3. Richard Barwell | —Councillor |
| 4. William Redfearn | —Assistant at the Durbar |
| 5. William Rooke | — -do- -do- -do- |
| 6. Robert Tomlinson | —Assistant at Cossimbazar |
| 7. Charles Purling | — -do- -do- -do- |
| 8. Thomas Henchman | — -do- -do- -do- |

¹Ledger of Kantababu of 1176 (1769-70).

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 9. Lewis Pitchet | — -do- -do- -do- |
| 10. Jacob Rider | —Company servant |
| *11. (Junior) Becher (Probably John Becher) | |
| 12. Dr. David Redman | —Surgeon, attached to Cossimbazar |
| 13. Gerard Ducarel | —Persian translator at the Durbar |
| 14. John Fydell | —Assistant at Cossimbazar |
| 15. Khoja Khawak | —the Armenian merchant ² |

It is also revealed in this account that Purling was in Rungpore and the transactions were going on with him there. Similarly Henschman was in Jahangirpur as its Collector. Henschman probably introduced his friend Rider at this time.

Between 1773 and 1784 Kantababu as the Banian to the Governor General came to know many Europeans. Unfortunately no other cash book or ledger of this period has been found. It is quite possible that they were destroyed under the advice of Hastings or by Kantababu himself. It is also presumed that earlier books of accounts have also been destroyed. Be that as it may, the cash book of 1191 or 1784-85 unfolds the names of many Europeans most of whom are British and Company servants. I am indebted to Dr. P. J. Marshall for identifying most of the names and only a few still remains unidentified. The reason for this difficulty is because the names were written not only phonetically but also in a language where letters were still emerging from their old forms. For instance 'l' or 'la' was not known to the written language where it was written with a 'n' or 'na'. The contemporary people knew which variation of the sound to adopt. Lokenath was written as 'Nokenath' but nobody except the illiterate or quasi-literate made the mistake in pronouncing. In a few instances, the new English translators have made the mistake of translating the name as 'Nokenath'. With European names this difficulty sometimes become unsurmountable. Similarly 'ra' and 'ba' was written as 'ba' so it was left to the reader to pronounce the word properly. The compound letters which in the 19th century so much helped the Bengali language were almost unknown or were just emerging. All this make the identification of European names written as heard, extremely difficult.

The cash book 1191 thus becomes extremely interesting as it contains the names of more than fifty Europeans. To quote

* This is probably one of the sons of the old Resident.

²The Business Ledger of Kantababu of 1180 (1773-74).

Dr. Marshall, 'The 1191 book looks to me like the small sums likely to be paid by any large Zemindar to the officials of the revenue department to ease the passing of accounts, issuing of Sanads etc. together with the small Nazrs made to keep in with prominent Company servants who were either on the Council at Calcutta or stationed at Murshidabad. I would not think that there is anything spectacularly corrupt or improper about any of it.'³

The list of the Christmas Nazr of Kantababu establishes the hierarchy, which was headed by the Governor General.

1. Warren Hastings was paid	Rs.96	(in gold 16 × 6 Mohurs)
Then came Mani Begum ,, ,,	Rs.64	(-Do- 16 × 4 Mohurs)
2. John Macpherson ,, ,,	Rs.32	(-Do- 16 × 2 Gold Mohurs)
followed by —		
3. Edward Fenwick, Chief of Murshidabad was paid	Rs.21	(One Gold Mohur and Rs. 5)
4. Mr. Evelyn, member Board of Revenue ,,	Rs.21	(One Gold Mohur and Rs. 5)
5. Charles Chapman ,,	Rs.16	(One Gold Mohur)
6. John Benn ,,	Rs.16	(One Gold Mohur)
7. Sir John D'Oyley, Resident at Durbar paid	Rs.16	(One Gold Mohur)
8. Charles Stuart— Councillor ,,	Rs.16	(One Gold Mohur)
*9. Major Scott ,,	Rs.16	(One Gold Mohur)
10. Charles Croftes ,,	Rs.16	(One Gold Mohur)
11. Mr. Hunt ,,	Rs.16	(One Gold Mohur)
12. Mr. Anderson, member Board of Revenue ,,	Rs.16	(One Gold Mohur)

Lokenath Nandy made a separate presentation to Mr. Hastings on 14 January after meeting him. The other inhabitants of Britain who can be identified in this year's cashbook⁴ are:—

³Letter of Dr. P. J. Marshall to the Biographer dated 10 July 1973.

* Probably Capt. Jonathan Scott, Hastings' Persian translator, rather than Major Scott his Agent now in England.

⁴Cash Book of Kantababu of 1191 (1784-85).

- | | |
|---|--|
| 13. George Foley | —Company servant |
| 14. Trevor Macan | —Custom's Master |
| 15. Samuel Charters of the Committee of Revenue | |
| 16. Major Thomas Metcalfe | |
| 17. George Dandridge | ---Persian and Bengali translator of Revenue Dept. |
| 18. Jacob Rider | —Company servant |
| 19. William Dunkin | —Calcutta Barrister |
| 20. John Fendall | —Assistant at Murshidabad |
| 21. Robert Beeby | —Judge at Nator |
| 22. William Larkins | —Company servant |
| 23. Joseph or Robert Cator | |
| 24. Mr. Richard Johnson | |
| 25. Joseph or Francis Fowke | —(Written only as Fowke Shaheb) |
| 26. Mr. R. O. Smith | —Company servant |
| 27. Thomas Raban | —Attorney |
| 28. Simeon Droz of the Committee of Revenue | |
| 29. William Johnson | —Barrister |
| 30. John Petrie | —Company Servant |
| 31. John Shore | —Member, Board of Revenue |
| 32. John Bayne | —Free Merchant of the House of Bayne and Colvin |
| 33. Charles Grant | |
| 34. Mr. Pegson | |
| 35. Mr. Wheler | —Councillor |
| 36. Mr. Feckins | |
| 37. Mr. G. N. Thompson | —Secretary to Warren Hastings |
| 38. W. Webber | —Secretary, Board of Revenue |
| 39. C. Shakespeare | —Sub Secretary to the Govt. |
| 40. William Ledlie | —Solicitor |
| 41. J. K. Davies | —Barrister |
| 42. John Hall | —Dep. Sec., Board of Trade |
| 43. Sireen Khoja Abraham | —Armenian. |

There are another 10 names which cannot be yet identified. In most cases the Europeans are mentioned only once and that also for a small sum of money. For instance John Shore was paid a Nazr of Rs. 5 on 18/19 September then again on 3 October he was paid another Nazr of

Rs. 5. Before the details of the cash book and what it informs is discussed, an interesting tale the cash book presents may be briefly related.

Kantababu on the 21/22 February 1785 sent Mango-Chutney to Mr. Sykes (written Sikshi Shahab) in England through one Mr. Smith which cost him Rs. 54. The identification of Mr. Smith has been difficult but he could ultimately be traced as one of Hastings' house-hold whom Kantababu also paid regular sums of money from time to time. Kantababu regularly patronised him. If a ledger could be made out of the payments made to Mr. Smith it would look like the one presented in pages 277-78.

From the income and expenditure accounts it is often difficult to get a clear idea of what was really going on. That this account is extremely eccentric in outlook, only raises the suspicion that Smith was perhaps an agent of Kantababu for advancing money to the Company's servants who were reluctant to come forward openly. Moreover it is clear that though Smith took charge of sending the 'Chutney' to Sykes he did not travel with the goods; but, as the date is so close to Hastings' departure, it is possible that Hastings himself was requested to do the carrying. The massive loan taken on 21 February could have been also taken with the object of sending money back to England. Payment on 21-23 March establishes that Smith continued to stay in Calcutta. There is a reference of Smith paying in full the rent of the house. It is not possible to say whether he was a tenant in Hastings' or Kanta's house. Perhaps this relates to the settling of accounts of the house owned by Francis Fowke, where R. O. Smith was a tenant and about which Cockerell complained on 24 June 1785.

The accounts of Hastings' house has been given in this cash book. The ledger page could be as following :—

The Account of Mr. Hastings' House (Barashaheb)

Income :		Expenditure	
17 Ashar/28 June.	Rs. 400- 0-0	through Ramananda Sarma	
18-21 ,,/2 July		Do	Rs. 325- 0-0
24 ,,/3 July		Do	50- 0-0
25-26 ,,/4-5 ,,		Ramprosad	25- 0-0
1 Sraban/13 ,,	Rs. 1,616- 0-0	Ramananda Roy	
		Paid Tax and salary to	
		Parbati Chowdhury Mohrar	Rs. 120- 0-0
10 Sraban/22 ,,		through Ramprasad	325- 0-0
15-16 Sraban/27-28 July		,, Ramananda	
		Thakur	Rs. 1,275- 0-0

24-27 Bhadra/5-9 Sept.		Balaram Ghosh given a loan	10- 0-0
5-6 Aswin/18-19 ,,	Rs. 192- 0-0	through Gopal Pal	
27-28 ,, /9-10 Oct.		,, Mahadeb Majumdar	192- 0-0
6 Aghran/19 Nov.	850- 0-0	,, Shyamnarain Roy	850- 0-0
17-18 ,, /30 ,,		,, Parbati Chowdhury	75- 0-0
27-28 ,, / Dec.		Loan to Mahadeb Majumdar and Misl.	26- 0-0
27-29 Pous/8 January	35- 0-0	Loan realised of Balaram and Mahadeb	
9 Magh /19 ,,	17,833- 5-5	Paid to Gourcharan Mallick	17,833- 5-5
		Repayment of loan	15,000-0-0
		interest	2,833-5-5
12 ,, /22 ,,	1,653-12-0	through Mahadeb Majumdar.	
26-28 /8 Feb.	1,000- 0-0	Do	
Total	Rs. 23,580- 1-5		Rs. 21,106- 5-5
		Income over Expenses	2,473-12-0
			23,580- 1-5

Kantababu's relation with the Europeans can be divided into two distinct categories. There were those who took a loan and the others who had some sort of business transactions with him, including payment to Barristers for suits. This last group consisted of William Dunkin, William Ledlie, William Johnson and J.K. Davies. Davies was paid in a case against Kaliprosad Ghosh a fee of Rs. 160 or ten Gold Mohurs on 21 November 1784.

To explore the motive of every transaction and the identification of all the Europeans in this cash book relating to Calcutta only, in 1191, can constitute not only a difficult task but another book of its own. It will be sufficient therefore to take a random survey of the entries, which will give a fair idea of the transactions indulged in, with the Europeans.

In the first three months of 1191 (Baisakh to Ashar) there are almost 20 transactions. The servants of John Macpherson, Trevor Macan, Samuel Charters and Crisp or Croftes were paid small amounts of money as tips. George Foley who was the other regular besides Smith, took money systematically though the lesser amounts and was advanced Rs. 95 as loan on 21-22 May, but the money was paid on a Sunday. The big amounts of the month of Ashar were Rs. 1026 which was paid to Mr. Smith on account of Major Thomas Metcalfe and Rs. 137-2-0 paid through Mr. Dechord (unidentified) on account of the taxes of the new rooms (*kutri*)

The ledger of Mr. Smith*

Date		Income	Expenditure	Rs.	
16 Baisakh	24 April		For expenses	Rs. 200-0-0	
23-26 Jaistha	2-5 June		Paid for expenses through Krisna Roy	" 8-0-0	
1 Ashar	12 June		Do	" 5-0-0	
11 "	22 June		Paid on account of Mr. Metcalf	" 1,026-0-0	
27 "	8 July		Paid for expenses	" 3-0-0	
15-16 Sraban	27-28 July		Paid as loan	" 200-0-0	
31-32 "	12 August		Do	" 150-0-0	
2-3 Bhadra	16 "		Paid for expenses	" 19-8-0	
6-7 "	19-20 "		Do	" 250-0-0	
24-27 "	5-9 Sept.		Do	" 500-0-0	
31 "	13 Sept.		Paid as loan	" 500-0-0	
1-2 Aswin	14-15 Sept.		For expenses	" 50-0-0	
7-8 Aghran	20 Nov.		Do	" 500-0-0	
17-19 "	30 Nov.		Inam to his Chobdar (mace-bearer)	" 5-0-0	
20-21 "	1-2 Dec.	Rs. 5,491-15-10	Paid for Kantanagar	" 1,700-0-0	
29 "	10 Dec.		Paid for Baharbund	" 3,791-15-10	
10 Pous	22 Dec.		Paid for his dress	" 150-0-0	
13-15 "	26 Dec.		Paid for his expenses	" 2-0-0	
18-20 "	30 Dec.		Paid as loan	" 367-0-0	
21-22 "	3 Jan. 1785		Paid for expenses	" 2-0-0	
8 Magh	18 Jan.		Paid as loan	" 501-0-0	
13 Magh	23 Jan.		For expenses	" 2-0-0	
15-16 "	26 Jan.		For expenses	" 5-0-0	
26-28 "	8 February		Paid as loan	" 504-0-0	
?	13-14 "		Do	" 60-0-0	
7 Falgoon	16 "		Do	" 31-0-0	
			Paid as loan	" 2,000-0-0	

* Now identified to be R. O. Smith who took leave of absence from 17 February 1785 and later resigned. (IOR, Bengal Public Consultations. Vol. 16, p. 292) Kantababu acted as his Attorney (MISS. EUR D.12 No. 98. Letter of Cockerell d.24 June 1785).

made in 1781. This was the tax of the quarter ended in March 1784, so the tax paid, were for 3 years and 3 months at the rate of Rs. 3-8-5 per month. The most interesting entry however is the payment of a Nazr of Rs. 21 to Mr. Wheler's wife consisting of one Gold Mohur and five Rupees on 2 July Friday 1784. Hickey writes Mrs. Wheler died in May 1783*.

The next three months (Sraban to Aswin) follow the same pattern. Payments to the '*Chopdar*' (mace-bearer) and '*Harkara*' (news bearer) of the Councillors and the Members of the Committee of Revenue continue. The important transactions are William Johnson's Hoondi of Rs. 1602 which arrived on 13 July but the money did not come so it was sent back. Presumably this refers to a loan taken by Johnson earlier. The other transactions are with John Petrie of the Khalsa Dept. On 29-30 August the revenue of Kantanagar relating to Ashar-Sraban Kist is paid through him, amounting to Rs. 4721-13-1. Similarly the revenue of the same period of the Pargana Baharbund amounting to Rs. 9796-4-19 and other properties amounting to Rs. 5000 are paid through Petrie. There are several interesting entries. On 14-15 July, Thursday a son was born to Bilsidor (can be Bill Sidor-unidentified) for which a Nazr of Rs. 21 was paid by Kantababu. The entry of 13 September translated : 'The papers of the Baharbund Dist. came to the Big Committee. The Arzee of mine was constructed by Dandarej Saheb** who was paid one Gold Mohur—Rs. 16.' This gentleman was no other than George Dandridge, the Persian and Bengali translator of the Revenue Department. Probably the importance of John Shore was not yet established as he is paid through Shyamnarain Roy on 18-19 September, a Nazr of only Rs. 5/-. This was repeated on 3 October as the Dashara Nazr. The same amount of Nazr was paid to Mr. Webber and Mr. C. Shakespeare for the *Punyaha*.

The third quarter (Kartick to Pous) has the maximum number of Europeans who are yet to be identified. For instance, who was Mr. Maib, the translator? Mr. Webber, Secretary, Board of Revenue received for some service a Nazr of Rs. 2 only. William Ledlie the Solicitor repaid on 13-14 December either a loan or sent in his receipt for a fee of Rs. 2500. Some of the transactions are quite obscure. Jacob Rider sent out a *Hoondi*

* Wm. Hickey—Memoirs Vol. III (3rd Ed) London (1923), p. 148.

** This is most probably the Arzee that has been recorded in the Proceedings of Revenue Dept. of 1st July 1784 (Vol. 82, p. 1920-21) entitled 'Petition of the Zemindar of Baharbund.'

in the name of Mr. Pegson. This looks like a repayment of debt but who paid for whom? Similarly William Ledlie's* account came up on 20 December where Rs. 2506-10-10 has been shown as payment in full settlement of his loan. Is it a loan or a fee? J. K. Davies, the Barrister was paid Rs. 480 on 30 December for 'Star bogitobi.'(?) in the case with Babu G. C. Ghosh.

The last quarter (Magh-Chaitra) is important historically as it contains the accounts incurred by Kantababu during the departure of Hastings (which has already been discussed in Chapter I), as also the several Nazrs that he paid to the new Governor General. Mr. Macpherson was paid two Gold Mohurs by Kantababu personally on 23-24 Magh (January 1785), then again a Gold Mohur and five Rupees (Rs. 21) on 3 February, and again on 16 February two Gold Mohurs (Rs. 32). As the Christmas Nazr list has been given earlier they need not be repeated. The business transaction of Mr. Scott is recorded on 26 January when he paid through Joychandrababu Rs. 3695 out of the total outstanding of Rs. 4000 in his cloth sale account. Smith also is found to be indulging in cloth business, buying shawls and kingkhabas on 21-22 February. The export of Mango-Chutney to Mr. Sykes is recorded on the same date. 6 March records a bill from John Feydell, Assistant at Murshidabad on Mr. John Hull, the Deputy Secretary to the Board of Trade amounting to only Rs. 138-4-0. Payments to '*Peadas*', '*Darwans*', '*Chopdars*' and '*Harkaras*' continue. Macpherson's servants assume importance as well as William Larkin's servants. The rate of payment of Stuart's servants increase with the importance of their master. On 14-15 March, Robert Beeby, the judge at Nator was paid for his expenses Rs. 50 only. Thomson Secretary to Warren Hastings was paid a Nazr of Rs. 5 on 20 March. A number of accounts are credited on 21-23 March 1785. Joseph or Rebert Cator repaid a loan of Sicca Rs. 706, Richard Johnson, S^a Rs. 220, William Dunkin, the Barrister paid S^a Rs. 500, Mr. Thomas Raban another Attorney Rs. 200, Simeon Dnoz paid Rs. 250 and Mr. Fowke paid Rs. 750; in all S^a Rs. 2626. The lawyers bills could have been credited also. This cash book does not give out any exciting news but is a clear indication of how life was led in 1784-85.

The most interesting cash book and ledger are those of Kantababu's cotton cloth trade of 1194 or 1787-88 where a business of Rs. 21,42,282-6-3

* There was however a Robert Ledlie, Barrister in 1785 Calcutta.

has been recorded. Moreover as both the cash book and ledger of the year are available, complete information of the transactions can be recorded. This has been done in Chapter five of Volume I of this book. Here only the involvement with the Europeans will be discussed.

There are 22 Europeans involved in the Cotton Cloth business. There are two French nationals, the head of Chandernagore Factory M. Donat (could be Donak or Donab, phonetically) and a Madame Kama or Kanma who worked through Indian agents, all the cotton cloth received from her has been described as coming from Farasdanga (literally—land of the French). Now Chandernagore was also known as Farasdanga as well as other areas where the French factories existed (for example the area of the French factory in Cossimbazar is still called Farasdanga). The problem faced is whether the lady functioned from Chandernagore or some other Farasdanga? There are 3 Armenians and a Swiss merchant as well as several English free merchants. The total number of the Englishmen including the free merchants comes to 16. As the ledger of this account is available it is found that 18 of the 22 Europeans have been allotted pages to describe their transactions. A summary of the income and expenditure of these gentlemen may therefore be read under.⁶

Transactions with Europeans in 1194 or 1787-88

	Income:		Expenditure	
The Armenians:				
1. Khoja Sirin Shaheb Armani, ^a Merchant	Sa	Rs.	3,008-	0-0
2. Khoja Fans Shaheb Armani ^b Do	,,	,,	2,000-	0-0
3. Khoja Girigar Ittafan Shaheb Armani Do	Sa	Rs.	3,435-	3-3
	,,	,,	3,435-	3-3
The French:				
4. M. Donat of French Company at Farasdanga	,,	,,	6,55,405-	8-0
The English:				
5. John Gregory ^c — free merchant	,,	,,	58,000-	0-0
6. Thomas Henchman — Do and Board of Trade	,,	,,	2,33,517-	13-6
7. John Fergusson — Do	,,	,,	19,993-	0-0
8. R. S. Perreau — Do	,,	,,	20,000-	0-0
9. and Palling — Do	,,	,,	14,025-	0-0

⁶Cash book and Ledger of 1194 (1787-88) of Cotton cloth trade.

(a) Sireen Khojah Abraham. (b) Khojah Phanoos Kalanthar.

(c) Could also be Gruebar.

10. Benjamin Mee of Bengal Bank	„ „	40,000- 0-0	„ „	40,150- 0-0
11. Edward Fenwick—Company servant			„ „	4,000- 0-0
12. Joseph Bourdieu — Do			„ „	6,019-13-0
13. Jacob Rider — Do			„ „	422- 0-0
14. Captain George Gowan— Do	„ „	6,149- 0-0	„ „	6,200- 0-0
15. George Udny—Maldah Chief	„ „	25,005-12-0	„ „	84,000- 0-0
16. John Cheap—Resident of Sonamookhy			„ „	27,456-14-9
17. J.Lumsden, Agent to the Governor General			„ „	3,990- 0-0

The Swiss:

18. James Frushard—free merchant	„ „	22,236-13-6
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The Others:

- 19. Charles Grant—Company servant
- 20. James Keighley—Chief of Cossimbazar
- 21. Mr. Smith
- 22. Madam Kama

The Bank:

The Bengal Bank	2,22,660- 0-0	2,09,917- 7-9
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The details of these accounts are equally interesting and have already been discussed in connection with the cotton cloth trade. An analysis of these accounts will reveal further, the involvement of Europeans in the Bengal trade of the time. The Europeans were at the time deeply immersed in trading with Indian merchants particularly in silk and cotton cloth. Most of the Europeans who appear in the list are well known. John Fergusson was the greatest private merchant. Thomas Henschman had probably the longest trading connection with Kantababu. He also held silk contracts under the Company. He wrote to the President Board of Trade on 14 September 1787, 'As I am going to Europe now in a very few days upon the Ravensworth, I request the favour of you to oblige me with an account current finally closed of the silk contract I held last year and to deliver up to me the contract and the bond of my securities as the transaction is at an end and my securities expect to be released.'⁷ The cotton cloth trade was important to the Company, who recorded a comparative chart of merit in the Proceedings of 1 July 1788 :—

Cotton Cloths best from Keerpoy and Chanderconnah in quality ;

- Do lowest Rates from Harripaul and Cuttorah (Katwa ?).
- Do Best assortment of quality from Santipore and Burron.
- Do In Sonamookhy are extensive and most profitable.
- Do In Chittagong, the newest factory, was expected to be good.

⁷Proceedings of the Board of Trade (Commercial) of 13 September 1787. p. 185.

These places were also capable of furnishing large quantities of the same quality:

Baftas of Rangpore are exceedingly good fabric.

Silk piece goods in Cossimbazar—if reduced in price will have a much longer range of sale.

Cotton Cloths of Radhanagore and Mundulghat are better than the Gurrah.⁸

Messers Perreau and Palling emerge as merchants of Silk in 1788. Previously R. S. Perreau in conjunction with Guinand is recorded as an indigo merchant.⁹ In April Perreau becomes cloth merchant.¹⁰ A year later he is found to be a cloth contractor of the Company and complains that his co-partner in business J. H. Guinand prevented him from writing to the Board earlier about the contract, the account of which could not then be submitted. This letter written on 2 June 1789 opened a rather interesting correspondence which continued for sometime, at the end of which Perreau and Guinand returned to become indigo merchants again.¹¹ Perreau broke up with his partner and joined Joseph Stephens in 1791.¹² In the next year Perreau and Palling are again found together acting as the Constituted Attorney to Thomas Masseyk.¹³ It is therefore quite possible that Perreau and Palling conjointly were doing business with Kantababu. The list of Agency Houses for 1789 in the India Calendar feature them also.

Apart from the silk, cotton and woolen cloths the Europeans were busy exporting different types of goods. It may be refreshing to transgress for a moment to note these extremely interesting items of export in 1791:

1. Sonamookhy Sugar, 2. Rungpore Sugar, 3. Benares Sugar,
4. Poppy Oil, 5. Sal Amonic, 6. Vegetable Alkali, 7. Borax unrefined,
8. Hemp and Jute, 9. Chassum or coarse silk, 10. Indigo, 11. Salt Petre,
12. Canes, 13. Shellac, 14. Long Pepper, 15. Gum Babul, 16. Yellow

⁸Ibid., of 1 July 1788, p. 9-14.

⁹Proceedings of the Board of Trade (Commercial) of 15 January 1788, p. 215-217.

¹⁰Proceedings to the Appendices of the Board of Trade of 23 April 1788, p. 417.

¹¹Proceedings of the Board of Trade (Commercial) of 5 June, 1789, p. 111, 6 Aug. 1789, p. 26 and Appendices 30 April, 1789, p. 479.

¹²Ibid., of 25 Feb. 1791, p. 624 and 3 May 1791, p. 1.

¹³Ibid., of 12 Oct. 1792, p. 454 and 13 Dec. 1792, p. 576-577 also see Perreau's confessions Pro. 4 July 1794, p. 93-96.

Dye-Ouch (Ochre?), 17. Munget (put up as Madder Root during sale advertisement), 18. Turmerick, 19. Tobacco, 20. Redwood, 21. Rattan.¹⁴

It was indeed a great time for exporters. Everything from broad cloths to velvets, from filature silk to piece goods and all types of cotton cloth were sent back to the ready market at Home.

To return to Kantababu and his Europeans, it is found that the extension of his cotton cloth trade in the following years, that is, 1195 or 1788-89 and 1196 or 1789-90 dropped the number of Europeans systematically. In 1195 the number was 14 while in 1196 it did not exceed 6. In the personal account of Kantababu however, in 1195 a different set of 10 Europeans have been mentioned. In course of the year Kantababu dropped at least 30 European names from his books of accounts.

Europeans in the Cotton Cloth account of 1195 (1788-89)

1. Sireen Khoja Abraham—an Armenian free merchant.
2. Khoja Phanoos Kalanthar—A Prince of Armenian merchants.
3. Said Hussein Arab—an Arab free merchant.
4. John Cheap—Resident, Sonamookhy.
5. Thomas Brown—Resident, Cossimbazar.
6. Claude Benezet—Sub-Treasurer
7. William Cullen—a free merchant
8. Charles Cockerell—Company servant & free merchant
9. Joseph Bourdieu—Do
10. J. K. Davies—Advocate General¹⁵

Europeans in the Personal account of 1195 (1788-89)

1. Mr. R. O. Smith—Company servant & free merchant
2. William Wroughton—Company servant
3. Thomas Burgess—Silk merchant
4. George Dallas—Company servant
5. James Keighley—Chief of Cossimbazar
6. C. R. Crommelin—Resident Radhanagore later transferred to Cossimbazar

¹⁴Proceedings of the Board of Trade (Commercial) of 4 Nov. 1791, p. 16-17, 8 Nov, 1791, p. 35-37 and 62-70.

¹⁵Cash book of the Cotton cloth trade of Kantababu of 1195 (1788-89).

7. Edward Fenwick—Chief of Murshidabad
8. John Fendell—Company servant.
9. George Foley— Do
10. John Becher son of Richard.
11. Khoja Khatick, Armenian.¹⁰

The identifications are by no means complete. The Armenian who comes up in the accounts as Kaiash or Fanash is certainly the prince of Armenian merchants known as Khoja Phanoos Kalanthar. Nothing, however, is known about Said Hussein Arab or Inbas Mughal. The person identified as Benezet has been described in the accounts as Bampot. Is this identification correct? Cullen comes up, as phonetically that is the closest possibility. There is however no trouble about Cookerell or Bourdieu as they are such specialised names.

The account also shows the payment of a commission of Rs. 1024 on 6 Ashar or 17 June to M. Donab or Donat; payment of Rs. 42 as Court expenses on account of 'Big' Barwell, paid to his clerk 'Bemhook' on the 18 Ashar; and the payment to Fenwick of Rs. 14 as miscellaneous expenses on 1 Sraban or 12 July.

In the second account trouble and uncertainty increase. The book has been savaged by the white ants and the period between Baisakh to Aswin is lost. Even the Kartick to Chaitra accounts have been very much damaged. Problem starts with Wroughton as there were two of the same name. One is a lawyer and the other a Company servant. The only way of knowing is to find that Kantababu paid the salary of William Wroughton's gardeners regularly, who looked after his Muradbagg garden in Murshidabad. The two names of 'Budge' and 'Jalice' or 'Dennis' are always together. They have been identified as Thomas Burgess and George Dallas. As James Keighley was paid a Nazr of Rs. 14-8 by Nrisinghababu as the chief of Cossimbazar on 8 November 1788, he is easily identified. Similarly Fenwick, Fendell and Foley are solidly placed. Even Becher who has been constantly written as 'small, or 'junior' can be identified with John the son of Richard Becher, on whose account a fair sum of money has been paid. Trouble starts with 'Karmnelon' which is closest to C. R. Crommelin who was transferred from Radhanagore in June 1788 and held the position of the Resident of Cossimbazar

¹⁰Cash book of Personal account of Kantababu of 1195. (1788-89).

till March 1789. The accounts refer to him on 3 November 1788. This account also refers to Khoja Khatick, the Armenian.*

The cloth account of 1196 or 1789-90 is extremely sketchy. It shows Mr. John Cheap being paid Rs. 2036 for a court case on 1 Jaistha or 12 May. It is presumed that John Cheap was fighting a suit of his own and therefore borrowed money from Kantababu. Messrs Perreau and Palling repay the balance of their debt amounting to Rs. 1542 on 1 Jaistha or 12 May on which occasion Rs. 10 was paid to their servants. Other European names cannot be identified.

With a rare foresight Kantababu got prepared a ledger of outstanding dues just a year before his death. This is a very interesting document. More than two dozen Englishmen have found their place here. Kantababu has also indicated from what year the outstanding was due. From this revealing list it can be seen what a huge amount became virtually unrealisable. Even the money sent to Hastings as a donation has been accounted here. Except William Dunkin, the Calcutta Barrister, all others are found to be indebted to Kantababu. This list gives a clear testimony why Kantababu refused any further donations to Hastings as well as the reason of his abandoning the city ultimately in favour of the country.

The ledger, apart from showing the outstanding of the individuals also show the outstanding of institutions. Two of them have been mentioned. The first is 'Mr. Hastings' House' which was left to the care of Kantababu during his tenure of office. As the house was sold in 1785 just after Hastings left India, the account obviously relate to the outstanding, prior to that date. The famous house was bought by George Thompson and Samuel Turner, at least with one of whom Kantababu had some contact (Cash book of 1191, 14-15 March, 1785). The ledger has stated that the sum shown was the outstanding of the account for a long time, leading to the conclusion that the amount left over was due to Kantababu from before 1785.

The outstanding account of the Bengal Bank is also of a similar nature, the difference being, that here, Kantababu instead of being the

* His name was Agha Catchick Arakiel, he was then the most prominent Armenian merchant who was also noted for his charities.

creditor, was the debtor for a neat amount of over Rs. 8000. So little is known about this Bank that it is hardly possible to make any comments. At least in his cotton cloth trading, Kantababu involved the Bengal Bank fully between 1787-1790. Now the credit account in the ledger of 1199 or 1792-93 of a large sum seems to denote that the Bank was functioning no more. If that was the real state of affairs then Kantababu's accounts contain a great deal of information not found else where. It shows the advances given and the cheque or note numbers when the Bank-money was paid. For example Radhakrisna Sinha was paid through Krisnacharandas Dutta on 23 Baisakh 1195 or 3 May 1788, Friday, a sum of Rs. 1900 by Bengal Bank notes bearing denomination and number as following: No 3368 of Rs. 1000, No. 1793 of Rs. 500 and Nos. 3700 to 3703 of Rs. 100 each.

List of Europeans in the Outstanding Ledger of Kantababu 1199 (1792-93)¹⁷

Name :	Income :	Expenditure :	Year from which outstanding
1. Expenses of Mr. Hastings' house		Rs. 1,775- 4-3	
2. Bengal Bank	Rs. 8,024-10-6		from 1198
3. John Becher and George Foley	torn	„ 26,781- 0-3 (incomplete)	torn
4. Archibald Seton	damaged by white ants.		
5. Warren Hastings, 'Bara Shahebji'	„ 5-12-6	„ 10,420-14-9	from 1198
6. William Dunkin	„ 11,363- 5-9	„ 10,000- 0-0	torn
7. Burrish Crisp		„ 1,267- 8-6	from 1198
8. R. O. Smith		„ 24,988-12-6	from 1198
9. Joseph Bourdieu		„ 9- 4-6	torn
*10. Thomas Lane		„ 7,851- 9-0	from 1184
11. Robert Beeby		„ 46,104- 3-0	from 1195, 1197 & 1198
12. Peter Speke and John Bebb (written Pitch & Beed)		„ 2,320- 0-0	House rent o Mr. Hastings
13. Charles Purling		„ 958- 2-0	from 1186
14. Charles Sealy, Barrister (a)		„ 74- 3-6	from 1186
15. Thomas Motte		„ 4,920- 0-0	„ 1184
16. Ambrose Gilbert		„ 32,270- 1-0	„ 1187
17. James Archdekin		„ 483- 4-3	„ 1183
18. John Fendell		„ 270- 4-6	„ 1190

¹⁷The Ledger of Kantababu of outstanding Accounts of 1199 (1792-93).

* Could also be Thomas Lyon, the architect.

(a) Could be George Shee also.

19. Stackhouse Tolfrey, Barrister	„ 928- 0-0	„ 1189
20. William Barton	„ 10,320-12-6	„ 1193
21. John Bebb	„ 32,985- 0-3	„ 1193
22. Michael Gaugh Robord (b)	„ 232- 0-0	„ 1187
23. Maguire (written Mayor Charge) (c)	„ 9,865-12-9	„ 1190
24. Captain Sutton	„ 1,160- 0-0	„ „
25. John Addison of Murshi- dabad	„ 9,705- 3-3	„ 1186

Of the above list two names could not be identified. The alternatives have also been suggested. From the list of the Europeans it is clear that Kantababu kept himself in close touch with the Barristers of Supreme Court. Sir William Dunkin, J. K. Davies, Advocate General, Stackhouse Tolfrey, Thomas Raban, Attorney, George Wroughton, Company's Attorney, and Charles Sealy were the luminaries of the legal profession. Presumably he was constantly involved in litigation. It is also possible that Kantababu apprehended some legal action against him after the departure of Hastings and kept himself in readiness for defence. Action was brought against so many 'Hastingites'* that Kanta expected that he might also be involved. It was indeed a difficult time. The Bengal Bank stopped payment in 1791 when two of the proprietors Benjamin Mee and Jacob Rider fled the country. In 1793 the Madras house of Belfour and Company instituted a suit against the Bank for cheating.¹⁸ James Keighley was delivered to the Court of Justice. Henchman, Rider and Grueber were also prosecuted for fraudulently overcharging the Company. Even Thomas Motte, a friend of Hastings became bankrupt. All these factors probably induced Kantababu to close down the lucrative cotton cloth trade.

Nrisinghababu popularly known as Nursing enhanced the connection of the family with the Europeans. In 1770-1773 he became the Banian to Roger Barwell, a younger brother of Richard. By 1775-1780, himself a famous silk merchant, he stood as Security for many Englishmen. He had the largest business transaction as the Security of James Irwin between 1775 and 1777. Between 1785 to 1787 he had extensive business with Thomas Henchman which ultimately culminated in what was stated as 'Banking Business' with Birjoo Panda, a

(b) Could be Michael George Prendergast.

(c) Could be Major Cairnes.

* As William Hickey wrote in his memoirs.

¹⁸Hickey, William. *Memoirs*. Vol. IV (1790-1809) (Second Ed. Lond. First Pub. 1925), p. 67 & 84.

Murshidabad money-lender, Henchman, Rider, and Nursing. The business crashed in 1790-91. Birjoo Panda was ruined. Nursing fled to Brindaban which was outside the Company's territory while Rider and Henchmen fled the country.¹⁹

The other members of the family also kept in close touch with the administrators. When news of Hastings' Impeachment reached India people became extremely unhappy as Hastings was very much admired in India by the Company servants and natives alike. William Hickey, no friend of Hastings, could assess the feeling very correctly.²⁰ A huge campaign was mounted to gather the testimonials of all the important persons of India. This was a monumental task indeed and the list contained every body that mattered, except the personal servants of Mr. Hastings. In these testimonials under the heading of the 'inhabitants of Calcutta' signs Bissen Churn Nandy (p. 711), and Goculchandra Nandy (p. 718).²¹ On 7 Aswin (Oct. 1788) a petition in Bengali was forwarded to the Directors of the Company with a copy to Hastings by the 'People of Calcutta', declaring in unequivocal language that under Hastings administration they were happy and alleging that those who have reported against Hastings were fault finders and useless men.²²

Kantababu patronised the individual Englishman not only by lending money but also by standing Security for him. On being appointed the Civil Paymaster, George Foley wrote to Edward Hay Esq, Secretary to the Government on the 27 December 1790, 'I am favoured with your letter of the 17th December, acquainting me that the Governor General in Council has been pleased to honour me with the appointment of Civil Pay Master and in compliance with the requisition of Government I beg leave to propose Kissen Caunto Baboo and Bustom Churn Baboo as my Securities.' Accompanying Foley's letter was the following communication from the Securities, 'We request you will be so good as to make known to the Governor General in Council, our readiness to become Securities to the Government for Mr. Foley in the capacity of Civil Paymaster, Calcutta, 27th December 1790. We have the honour to be etc.

¹⁹Raja Hurrynath Roy vs-Shyamcharan & Ramcharan Nandy, 1825-1832—Equity Suite. Deposition of Raja Harinath.

²⁰Hickey, William. *Memoirs*. Vol. III (1782-1790), p. 334.

²¹Debates of the House of Lords on the evidence delivered in the trial of Warren Hastings Esquire (J. Debrett. 1797).

²²Brit. Mus., Add. Mss. 29195., ff. 419-420.

Sri Krisnakanta Nandi, Baisnabchurn Nandi.' (signed in Bengali under the English letter.)

The resolution followed 'Agreed that Kissen Cauntoo Baboo and Bustom Churn Baboo be accepted as Securities for Mr. Foley in the office of the Civil Paymaster and Ordered that the Company's Attorney be informed accordingly.' The Company's Attorney William Jackson wrote to the Company that the accompanying Bond was required to be executed by the Civil Pay Master and his Securities, which was subsequently done.²³

Of the other Englishmen Kantababu kept contact with Charles Chapman and William Larkins after the departure of Hastings. This was almost official acquaintance as Kantababu was required to submit the accounts of Hastings which were with him. Chapman got in touch in connection with getting a large subscription from Kantababu for raising money to meet the cost of the Impeachment. He also wrote back to Hastings informing him of the death of his old servant, Kantababu.

Thus throughout his life Kantababu lived amidst Europeans and particularly Englishmen. Though he was not the first generation to know them, he was certainly amongst the very few who knew them intimately. The influence of the practical and enterprising nation can be clearly found reflected in his character which was industrious, methodical and aspiring. He improved his situation by the use of his intellect and fully utilised the opportunity that came in his way by the political, economic and social changes of the time.

The personal cash book and ledgers of Lokenath continue to enlighten about his personal connection with the Europeans. It is not at all surprising to find that his connections with the Company servants had dwindled down to the bare minimum in the first few years after his father's death. He had utilised the association of his parent with the English Company, without, perhaps, trying to forge fresh contacts with them.

Mr. Smith who has at last been identified as R. O. Smith was probably a tenant of Fowke, the Resident at Benares. Charles Cockerell

²³I.O.R. Bengal Public Consult. Range 3, Vol. 55. Proc. of 31st December, 1790.
p 764-765 & 766-768.

wrote in a letter dated 24 June 1785 that Smith had left the country. He did not resign from the Company service till a few years later. Unable to get the outstanding rent, Cockerell applied to Smith's Attorney Cantoo Baboo, who refused payment at first (IOR, MSS. EUR D 12. No. 98) but probably paid later. The other regular, George Foley continued to be patronised and later became the Civil Paymaster in 1790. Foley continues to appear both in the cash books and ledgers of Lokenath after the death of his father. The sums of money consisted of sometimes a loan of Rs. 2000 or repayment of it, sometimes a Nazr of Rs. 16 which was paid in silver and not in gold according to the old practice. Foley was also paid his expenses amounting to Rs. 40 or even upto Rs. 80. The boat hire charges for going to Cossimbazar was also paid. There is also the mention of payment of salary of Rs. 180 to him. This presumably should be perhaps read as 'paid to Foley for payment of salary' to other people or his own staff. George Foley appears in the cash book of 1201 or 1794-95 and then in the ledger of 1205 or 1798-99 (which is very much damaged). Archibald Seton is the other Company servant who continues to appear in Lokenath's accounts. His account is however quite different. He pays out money for buying different types of cloth which are probably sold in his name also (as there are 'Batta Jumma' in his name). 'Batta' can be translated as commission or interest. The amounts are not big but more or less of a regular nature. Seton appears in the cash book of 1201, in the ledger of 1205 and also in the cash book of 1208 or 1801-02. Thomas Brown the resident at Cossimbazar was engaged in heavy transactions with Lokenath in 1208 or 1801-02. It seems that he carried on a fairly large scale cotton cloth business through Lokenath.

Europeans in the cash book of 1201 (1794-95)

1. George Foley—Company Servant
2. Samuel Turner— Do
3. James or John Taylor
4. Major Robert Haldane
5. Mr. Paxton—Free Merchant
6. Archibald Seton—Company servant
7. Nicholas Grueber— Do
8. William Barton—Member, Board of Trade.²⁴

As the cash book only deals with the first four months of the year corresponding to 11 April to 24 August, it can be considered incomplete.

²⁴Cash book of Maharaja Lokenath of 1201 or 1794-95.

The business ledger of 1205 or 1798-99 is extremely damaged. Only the name of George Foley can be read.²⁵ If there be any other European names it is quite impossible to decipher.

The cash book of 1208 or 1801-02 contains many European names. Out of about 40 names only 25 could more or less be identified.

The Europeans in the cash book of 1208 (1801-02)²⁶

1. Thomas Brown—Resident at Cossimbazar
2. Walter Ewer—Sheriff of Calcutta
3. Archibald Seton—Company servant
4. John White—Judge of the Calcutta Court of Appeal
5. James Edmiston—Futtyghur Paymaster & Commissory of Bazaars
6. Charles Graeme—Register at Rajshahi
7. Lambert Molony—Register at Dacca
8. Sir Frederick Hamilton—Register at Hooghly
9. George Hatch—Member, Board of Revenue
10. Richard Becher (Junior)—Company servant
11. Capt. Charles Mouat—Engineer
12. John Hyde—Judge and official of the Supreme Court
13. John Lumsden—Register of Sadar and Nizamat Diwani Adalats
14. John Buller—Board of Revenue
15. Neil B. Edmundstone—Secretary in Secret Dept. (or William A, member, Board of Trade.)
16. George Udney—Member, Supreme Council
17. Budge of Madapur (near Murshidabad) ?
18. Kelator Do Do ?
19. William Dunkin—Could be James Dunkin an Advocate
20. Judge John Becher—Judge of Murshidabad Zilla
21. Samuel Beachcroft—Commercial Resident Bauleah
22. Major J. Hunter—19th N. I.
23. Capt. Lt. H. Imlack—14th N. I.
24. John or Robert Patton—5th N. I.
25. Mr. & Mrs. James Stuart—Register of Sadar & Nizamat Diwani Adalats.

²⁵The Business ledger of Maharaja Lokenath of 1205 (1798-99).

²⁶The Cash book of Maharaja Lokenath of 1208 (1801-02).

From the list a pattern can be discerned without difficulty. The Registers of different Districts and the Sheriff of Calcutta were given small gifts as Lokenath hoped to buy quite a number of Zemindaries in Revenue Sale. He did buy quite a few properties in this manner. The members of the Supreme Council and the Board of Revenue were normally pleased as well as the Judges and other important members of the Government. The Army Chiefs stationed at Berhampore also were considered as necessary for friendship.

It is almost certain that by 1801-02 Lokenath was once again fanning out his influence on the Europeans and had he lived, he would have most certainly taken advantage of these associations. Unfortunately death took him away in May 1804, when he had scarcely completed his 40th year. With him died the tradition of keeping in close touch with the members of the European community in different stations of Bengal. The remnants of the silk and cloth trading which was still continued by Lokenath died completely. The way of life carried on by Kantababu and his son disappeared. When Harinath, the son of Lokenath attained majority and got back his Estate from the Court of Wards his outlook on life was that of a Permanent Settlement Zemindar created by the 'British' East India Company. His interests were education and culture and not trading and industry (in fact 'business' became a dirty word in his time and he never admitted that his family traditions were of trade and business). The original moorings were thus cast away in 1820, so with Lokenath's death in 1804 ended the era created by Kantababu.

It may not be out of place to mention here that Cossimbazar between 1765 and 1804 saw the development of an European community which gradually dwindled as the importance of the Berhampore cantonment and the city of Calcutta increased. By 1800 only those Europeans who were officially connected with the administration and such prosperous persons like the architect Thomas Lyon were living in Cossimbazar.²⁷ Mr. Fergusson and Mr. Barton had already moved out to Berhampore establishing themselves in 'palatial buildings. In 1778 however the European society in Cossimbazar was broadly based. A cursory glance at the European inhabitants in different occupations will establish this fact.

²⁷Hickey, William. *Memoirs*, Vol. IV (1790-1809) 2nd Ed. p. 217.

'The list of Europeans at Cossimbazar and its environs with their different occupations.'²⁸

1. Hugh Coming —Agent for Mr. Higgins in selling Europe articles and other goods.
2. James McGee —Selling Europe goods on his own account. He has an European wife and two children.
3. Anthony Carrel }
4. Francis Wise } —Taylorsmen of but indifferent characters.
5. Mathew Stephenson —Selling goods. A pass from the Governor General.
6. Alexander Colvin —On his way from Patna to Calcutta was to leave this area on the 19th instant.
7. Henry Murry —Butcher, Serves the gentlemen of the 2nd Brigade.
8. George Castairs —A servant on his way to Patna. He has a very good character (certificate) from Colonel Watson.
9. Thomas Burke }
10. James O'Harra } —Taylors at Cossimbazar
11. George June —Employed by Mr. Worship of Barrackpore.
12. John Macdonald O'Neil—Employed by Mr. Templer in the care of his elephants.
13. Lawrence Wilch }
14. William Dixon } —Partners in selling liquors which hath no license. Dixon hath free Mariners Indentures from the Company.
15. John Cordingly —Writer to Mr. Burgh.
16. Charles Issacs —Employed by Mr. Burgh as Agent for the contractors for repairs of the cantonment.
17. Samuel Nixen —Servant of Mr. Wroughton.
18. William Fulder —Servant of Mr. Martin.
19. George Cook }
20. Robert Penfold } —Postelears to the Nabob
21. John Mather }
22. James Hobbble —Invaled from Calcutta.'

In conclusion it might be said that connection with the Europeans proved to be an important influence in Kantababu's rise to power. He

²⁸Proceedings of the Provisional Council of Revenue at Murshidabad of 20 July, 1778, p. 494.

utilised his connections in an intelligent manner and was able to derive maximum benefit for himself and his family. He not only knew the most powerful Europeans like Hastings, Sykes and Barwell but forged a friendly association with others as well. Most of them admired him and approved his trading efficiency. A few of them like Clavering and Monson hated him. Francis was always suspicious of him while Thomas Pattle was slightly afraid him.²⁹

Barwell's letters give a complete picture of Nursing's transactions with his brother Roger and may be considered to be the fitting closure to this chapter. Richard was the second son of William and Elizabeth Barwell, while Roger was the fifth of the eight brothers*. Nursing was the Banian of Roger between 1770 and 1773. Richard, who probably approved the choice in the beginning, started having doubts when he could not send back the accounts to Roger who had gone to England.

Very much angry by his discomfiture, he wrote to Roger on 1 November 1770, 'Your friend Narsing is a dog but I hope to keep him in order. It is well Roger that power is on your side to oblige the kinds to do you justice, a thousand frivolous pretexts and accounts subsequent to your departure, the inventions of downright Banians are set in opposition to the engagements you have bound him to.' Richard forwarded to Roger a letter from John Graham written from Mutijheel (Murshidabad) on 28 October, 1770, which presented a picture much more reasonable than can be assumed from the rather colourful Barwell introduction to it. Graham wrote, 'Since the receipt of your letter the 17th I have had three different conferences with Nursing, wherein he insisted on speedy payments and so collateral security, in urgent and express terms. The former demand led him to expatiate a good deal on the advantage that had accrued to your Brother from the settlement of his affairs by the mode of this Bond before his departure, on the little progress that he had yet been able to make in the collection of the outstanding balances and the very heavy sufferer that he must be, if he is so urgently pressed for payment, before he effects recoveries of the balances at a time when money is so scarce and not procurable on the point of security.' Graham suggested that his brother 'Cauntoo' might be bound with him in the new Bond to which Nursing objected vigorously. Graham

²⁹I.O.R. Richard Barwell's letter Book MSS. EUR. D.535 Part I and II, f. 128-130.

* William, Richard, John, James, Roger, Henry, Daniell & Thomas Smith.

continues. 'On the whole I think Nursing very well disposed to do all manners of justice to Roger Barwell and that his backwardness in making payments has been entirely owing to his not being able to make any collection of the balances. I can now, I believe, bring him to promise a payment of 50,000 Rs. in 20 days, 25,000 more in December and 25,000 in January. These payments you observe will complete a Lac in the space of three months and the debt will be thereby considerably decreased. At the expiration of that period a new adjustment may be made with Nursing on the most favourable terms we can effect and collateral security taken from him in goods.....In the meantime I shall not refuse any sum he may offer me in payments of the 50000 Rupees. With respect to the article of Interest it was never Nursing's intention not to allow it. It was only an omission because he thought the clause of the Bond rendered it unnecessary to insert it. The deductions of 14050 Rs. he still urges claim to, but is willing to refer the justice of it to your Brother and yourself; the 8500 Rs., he says, is a balance of a monthly cash account after the Bond was granted but which Roger went away without adjusting; the 5550 Rs. he declares was a part of the outstanding balances and which he accordingly collected from Ramjee Podar, but that you ordered him to pay it back, to make good some prior claims on the Podar from the Company and unless therefore he is enabled to collect it again, he esteems himself entitled to a deduction from your Brother's Bond.' The Barwells however accepted this arrangement. Richard wrote to Graham on the 4 November 1770, 'The Order on Nursing's Gomastah for 12000 C Rs. received and a bill drawn by Henchman for 12000 Rs. More whatever money you receive pay into Henchman's hand and take his bills on the payment in general.' The matter rested there for a year, but then it is found that Roger had been commenting on Richard's behaviour disparagingly which brings a rather vexed letter from Richard to their sister Mary Barwell on 30 September 1771. Richard now wrote to William, suggesting that Roger with all this amassed fortune should immediately enter the sacred bliss of marriage, on 24 December 1771. The brothers took a year to patch up their differences. Richard wrote on 25 January 1773, '...Nursing your Banian has not been so punctual in his payments as I could have wished and indeed gives me as much trouble in recovering from him the amount of his Bond as lays in his power but I flatter myself, it will not now be long before your account with him will be finally adjusted, for Mr. Pattle writes me, he has entered into engagements to complete his payments and has settled with him a Kistbundee to that end. That part of Pattle's letter is as follows :—Nursing has been

with me these two days I have not been able to do anything satisfactory with him, he acknowledges the signing (of) the account of 15th August but says his signature was extorted from him and that he owes not so much as the ballance by some thousands. Besides that he lays claim to 14000 Rs. with 3 years interest in account with Roger Barwell and further says, you have omitted giving him credit for a payment of 10,000 Rs. made on 29th August thro' Rashbehari Podar and Panchanand Sircar particularly specified in the accompanying list of payments, which he delivered to me and which I send you. By these pretences he reduces the balance due from him to about 30000 Rupees, this he promises to pay in three Kists, the first payment to be made in ten days. I have represented to him that this adjustment would be very unsatisfactory to you and that you wanted the money immediately, but he is as obstinate as a Mule and what can I do with him ?...' Richard wrote to his brother that he had advised Pattle to take as much money as possible from Nursing. He also informs, 'I must inform you that Narsing is right with regard to the payment of the 10,000 Rs. on the 29th August, but as it was made soon after the account of the 15th of the same month it had escaped me and I supposed it had been included in the account. The 14000 Rs. he lays claim to is for disbursements made on your account but as nothing was said by you touching those disbursements, I did not admit them until you were pleased to give me your approbation for allowing them.' 'It is necessary I should add here that Narsing advanced his claim for the 14000 Rs. soon after your departure for England for I am not certain whether I gave such information in any of my former letters. The closing of Narsing's account and the recovering the amount of the certified balances due about 19000 Rs. will bring all your property into one Grand Total, which considering the Times, I am determined either to invest in the Company's notes or keep myself until an opportunity of Remittance shall offer, for the losses and disappointments which have attended Gentlemen of Property by loans made to private merchants have been such to deter me from either risking yours or my own property in that way'³⁰

Roger Barwell did not live to recover his dues but died in Ascot in the summer of 1774. In the Mayor's Court Inventories the payments made by Nursing are recorded and accepted by Richard Barwell who signed

³⁰I.O.R. Richard Barwell's Letter Book (Part I & II) MSS. EUR. D.535. ff. 33-34, 71-75, 102 and ff. 5, 17 & 104-105.

the document at Calcutta on 3 August 1774. The account is as following :—

Credit the account of Roger Barwell.³¹

1773 February,	5	By Cash Received of Nursing Nundy—Rs.	10000-0-0
„ May,	5	Do Do Do —,,	10000-0-0
„ June,	15	Do Do Sa Rs. 32040 —,,	37166-6-6
Total Paid Current			Rs. 57166-6-6

It was not till the 30 May 1775 that the accounts could be finalised. Richard Barwell signed the total amount due to the Estate of Roger Barwell to be current Rs. 3,77,254-7-2 of which amount the balance due from Nursing Nundy since 15 June 1773 was C Rs. 7.736-9-9.³²

Association with Europeans though proved to be an attainment to Kantababu, became disastrous to his brother, whose business with Henchman & Rider floundered in 1790; thus providing copy-book cases about the boon of temperance and the folly of haste, greed and cvetousness.

³¹I.O.R. Mayor's Court Inventories; Range 155. Vol. 4, No. 19.

³²Ibid., No. 49.

CHAPTER VI

THE SOCIETY OF KANTABABU (1773-1794)

The East India Company introduced many innovations which were slowly accepted by the Bengal society. They started using the word '*Baboo*' as an honorific term almost similar to the word 'Gentleman' or 'Esquire', according to its 18th century British conception. Only a successful and wealthy merchant was allowed to use the term '*Baboo*'. According to the Journals and Ledgers of the English Company, Prietram Cotmah of Calcutta, who was also the head of the vast and prosperous merchant community throughout Bengal, was the first to receive this honour in 1748 and came to be known from that time as Prietram Baboo. The second '*Baboo*' took a long time to come and four years later Govindram Bysack, probably also of Calcutta became the second '*Baboo*' in the Journals and Ledgers. Ramoobaboo was most possibly the next 'official' *baboo* in 1754, while Gocul Possady of Chinsurah though styled himself as '*baboo*' was not recognised as such till 1765.

Kanta became known as '*Baboo*' after the battle of Plassey. In the documents of September 1758 (13 Aswin 1165), he was called 'Mahamahim Krisna Kanta Babuji' in one and 'Kantababoo' in another, which prove that his stature and position as a merchant-trader who was also the Banian to Warren Hastings, the Chief at Cossimbazar was already quite established in the society. Throughout his life he preferred to call himself by this name only, and was known as such to the community, who sometimes forgot what his surname was. A year after the death of Kantababu when Hastings had to refer to his late Banian, he could only recall that he had another name but could not remember the full name of his Banian who had served him faithfully for 25 years. This was not because of any callousness on the part of Hastings but because 'Cantoo Baboo' became by usage the one and only name of Krisna Kanta Nandy. Even in his later days when he became the father of 'Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur', he was always referred to as 'Dewan Cantoo Baboo' and sometimes as 'Dewan Krisna Kanta Babooji.' Though '*Baboo*' was debased in usage later, but throughout the Eighteenth Century it denoted a man of status and prestige.

The country was undergoing vast changes. In 1772 the Mint was transferred to Calcutta from Murshidabad. Jagat Seth lost the power of minting money. The seat of power and the Government had shifted to Calcutta. The exodus from Murshidabad and the adjacent areas was enormous. Merchants of the once prosperous Mahajantooli and Gujrati-tooli evacuated to Calcutta. The Brahmins went to the localities that were now being created for them with gifts of land and money by the newly rich non-Brahmin prosperous leaders of the new society. All this movement did not distress Kantababu who purchased all the lands and properties around his ancestral home. Nrisingha bought a part of the Mahajantooli along with the house of Jagat Seth and created his separate establishment there.

By 1772 the English merchants were dominating and the English East India Company was the triumphant foreign trader. They fully controlled the trade and commerce. The French, the Dutch, the Danes, the Armenians and other foreign traders were only waiting to be fully eliminated from the East Indian scene. The prosperity of the English traders was also a signal to diaster for certain commodities like the silk. Encouraged by the interest of the English Company the *Pykars* went on increasing the price of silk which were greatly in demand. This inordinate greed ultimately killed the silk trade of Bengal. First it became cheap to manufacture silk cloth in Manchester and then it became a better business to import Italian silk to India. The English factory of Surat which kept an account of the silk bales imported from Bengal for export to England show the great decline. In 1765 there were 195 bales priced at Rs. 2,57,650. In 1773 it dropped to 27 bales priced at Rs. 34,160. The trickle ended in 1786, recording 5 bales for Rs. 3,698 and one bale of better quality for Rs. 2,233. The cotton cloth trade which also met with the same fate continued for sometime longer. The decline in trading has been fully described in the Fifth Chapter of the first volume of this book and need not be repeated here. The social economy of Bengal became quite different from what it had been previously and the emerging of a new age centred around the English administrators in Calcutta was evident.

Calcutta was changing beyond recognition. The foundation of the metropolis has been laid and now it was expanding on all directions. The closely bastioned European town was no longer necessary and several streets saw busy building activities. The buildings on the Old Court House

Street and the Esplanade were specially fascinating. The Chowringhee was being laid out bedecked by the garland of magnificent buildings. The new St. John's Church came up besides the old cemetery, in the land of Maharaja Nabakrisna. A new cemetery was laid out in the south of the Park Street, which was considered the southern extremity of the expanding town. William Hickey copied the twelve prints of Daniell and numbering the buildings added his comments, from which it is possible to know many facts.¹ The Governor's House which was situated on the south of the old Fort William near the river, belonged to Mohammed Reza Khan. Here resided all the Governors of Bengal from the time of Lord Clive, though Lord Clive himself lived in the Council House. The new Fort William was being completed at Gobindapur, a sleepy village, the inhabitants of which were paid off for their land and huts in order to give proper shape and security to the new fort. Parts of the old fort were now being demolished where new buildings were coming into being. Such a house was completed on the north of the Governor's House which was first occupied by Mr. Wheler and on his death by Hon'ble Charles Stuart who left it to the occupation of Sir John Shore till he became the Governor of Bengal. The Tank Square turned into a very interesting place. The Old Court House came to be used as a place of public entertainment. This immense building which gave its name to the road, which became the fashionable address of the wealthy officials and the elite of the community was later demolished to make place for the St. Andrew's Church. Besides this, to the west rose a range of buildings, erected in 1777 under the supervision of architect Thomas Lyon* and bought by Richard Barwell soon after, from whom the Company took it on lease; this was the first three storied building in Calcutta. The Company allotted the building to its junior officers for residence with the restriction that nobody drawing more than Rs. 300 per month were allowed to stay here. So the building came to be known as the Writers' Building. This conglomeration of houses with two gentlemen to a house was built with their offices behind their premises. The situation was airy as it was within 50 yards of the great tank. The monument erected by Holwell to commemorate the Black-hole tragedy stood on the western extremity of the building in front of the old fort's alleged prison house. On the north of the Holwell's Monument and just behind the Writers

¹Paintings by William Hickey of 12 scenes of Calcutta in December 1789, displayed at the Victoria Memorial Hall, Calcutta.

* He retired to Berhampore, building himself a house there. He died in that house in Cossimbazar in 1798-99 (W. Hickey. Part IV).

Building was the Theatre which was built on subscription around 1774. Behind it to the north (which became later Clive Street and after Independence Netaji Subhas Road) was the residence and office of Messrs. Paxton & Cockerell's. Two houses to the north was the residence of Mr. Middleton. The western side of the road was still occupied by the Old Fort.

On the eastern side of the great tank known as Old Court House Street (part of which is now known as the Mission Row behind Dalhousie Square East) the corner house in the northern side was inhabited by Attorney Mr. Raban, while in the southern corner lived and died General Clavering. In between was situated the Danish Mission Church from which the modern name of the street has been derived. The Chowringee was laid and palatial buildings sprang up on its east side. In twelve years the road became the most fashionable area in Calcutta. From north to south the houses were inhabited by Jacob Rider, Mr. T. Grant, the garrison paymaster, Col. Mordaunt, Mr. Hays the secretary general, Hon'ble Charles Stuart, Sir Charles Blount, Col. Wood, Mr. Dawson, Col. Collesis, the military store keeper, Col. Murray and Charles Short. The Chowringee had such a cluster of magnificent buildings that it could have alone achieved Calcutta the epithet of 'City of Palaces'. The huge mansions of Sir Elijah Impey in the deer park (now known as Park Street) and Governor General Hastings' in Alipore (now a teachers' training centre in Judge's Court Road) provided the fitting climax to the city planned, built and lived by the servants of the English East India Company. The houses were predominantly English in style.

The Indians did not lag behind. The huge sprawling palace of Nawab Mirzafar though utterly ruined still testifies its past grandeur. Umichand's great palace and Govinda Mitra's Pagoda in Halsibagan (name derived from Mr. Halsey who bought both the structures and demolished them turning the area into a garden or 'bagan') is completely destroyed. Maharaja Nabakrisna set up a huge palace in Shovabazar. Gocul Ghoshal went out of the city's southern extremity creating palatial buildings for himself in Bhukailash. Chitpore became the aristocratic locality where Ganga Govind Singh spread out his huge abode. (Now even Prawnkissenbabu's Road does not remind of their past glory, the rest of the property was purchased by the Tagores. Still later the descendants of Ganga Govinda purchased many of the Tagore palaces and lived there. But they did not come back to Chitpore). Krisna Kanta

Nandy's place in Chitpore was extremely modest by comparison. Kantababu bought in December 1773 a house on Chitpore Road which covered 3 bighas and 7 kattas of land for Rs. 11,001. Seven years later he bought a garden measuring 6 bighas and 3 kattas in Ultadingi for Rs. 1001 on 19 October 1780. He used to grow fruits and coconuts in his Ultadingi garden and brought them by boat to his house, the landing point being Harinath Dewan's Gaut on the Ganges which was but a stone's throw from the house.

Society was also changing. More and more people were coming to stay in and around Calcutta. They saw the Europeans at close quarters and were influenced. Gone were the days when the Brahmins would write either Sarma or Thakur as their surname. Now the various surnames were being used more frequently. Most of the non-Brahmins also discarded the modest universal stamp of slavery of their ancestors and got rid of 'Das' as a surname. The merchants and traders who had been using their trading names such as Cotmah or Katma, Banik, Possary, Kansaree, Shankharee, Koyal, Patoonee, Kapali etc. dropped them to adopt either their religious surnames or the surnames approved by their castes. Almost everybody tried to become a landholder adopting a surname suitable to his status. They adopted Roy, Chowdhury, Talookdar, Tarafdar, Tafadar, Sikdar, Majumdar etc. as their new surnames, some claiming to be Mughal officers retained Khan, Mahlnobis Dafadar or Mansabdar, while many of the Indian servants of the Company adopted their vocation as surnames, thus the society found Canoongoes, Karkoons, Khanshamas, Contractors etc.

The several bazars or market places which were developed during the time served as the centre pieces of the new settlement of the Indians. The list of the bazars with the name of the Ezaradars who took them for a year only, outbidding their competitors in the annual outcry also apprehends the new society.

<i>Bazars :</i>	<i>Ezaradars :</i>	<i>The highest bid :</i>
Sootanutty	Seereehurry Tagore	Rs. 2,291- 0- 0
Hutcollah	Jogornaut Cansamah	„ 577- 5- 0
Charlesbazar	-do-	„ 718-14- 0
Burrahbazar	Rajeeb Paul	„ 2,325- 0- 0
Bowbazar	Durgapersaud	„ 1,525- 4- 0
Boytakconna	-do-	„ 1,916-12- 0

Rambazar	Nanny Baboo	„ 700- 0- 0
Loll bazar	Bydenaut Roy	„ 700- 0- 0
John bazar	Gowry Churn Ghose	„ 1,293- 0- 0
Muchua bazar	Francis de Mello	„ 2,016- 0- 0
Dhormotullah	Joinidey Mustofi	„ 1,480- 0- 0
Colootolah	Ram Niddy Nundy*	„ 100- 0- 0
Simlar bazar	Nilmoney Metre	„ 606- 0- 0
Arcooler bazar	Seereehurry Tagore	„ 201- 0- 0
Coshaitolla	Ram Niddy Nundy*	„ 175- 0- 0
Sovah bazar	Cunderp Coberage	„ 2,001- 0- 0 (with drawn)
-do- (2nd Outcry)	Rajah Nabakrisna	„ 500- 0- 0
Colimbah bazar	Sapullram Sein	„ 200- 0- 0
John Nagoor	Ram Niddy Nundy*	„ 75- 0- 0
Rajar Nagoor	-do-	„ 75- 0- 0
Sloops and Boats	Gopee Churn Silmilly	„ 1,515- 0- 0
Sisighar (Glass)	Birhun Oolah	„ 750- 0- 0
Bhang, Maud, Ganja (Hemp, liquor, intoxicants)	Gopeenaut Paul	„ 3,770- 0- 0
Red lead and		
Vermillion	Ramjeeb Baul	„ 175- 0- 0
Fire Works	Sapullram Sein	„ 355- 0- 0 ²

Even this list shows how powerful Nabakrisna was at this time so that the annual outcry of Rs. 2,001 was rejected for accepting the Raja's Rs. 500 only. The new society grew around the new-Bengalis and old houses like those of Nator, Burdwan, Nadia and Dinajpore were in trouble. Nator and Burdwan tried to take advantage of the patronage of the Majority gaining fringe benefits. Nadia kept himself strictly neutral while Dinajpore was troubled by his own difficulties being too preoccupied to take any part in the Majority's dispute with the Governor General. The elite of the city were also divided into two sections, those who supported change and progress generally supported Hastings while the old aristocrats and traditionalists supported the Majority.

The common people however were not very much concerned. They were glad that pilgrim routes were opened to Puri, Benaras and even to

*Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 16th May, 1774, p. 512.

* Shikdar of Baharbund (Rev. Dep. Prog. 27 December 1776, p. 5848).

Kamakshya in Assam. Every year several groups of pilgrims visited these places at the suitable seasons of the year. The roads were not without danger, the seat of pilgrimage had its hazards, privations and hard life often accompanied the pilgrims. A successful journey back home did not always end in blissful harmony by reaching the bosom of the family. Neem Charan Das Bairagi was excited enough to petition to the Revenue Board writing with great sentiment that he had been on a pilgrimage to Juggernath Temple (Puri) in the month of Jaistha 1180, leaving his wife at home, Coming back in the month of Augun (six months later) he found that his wife left his home and was living with some one else in another village.³ It is not known what action was taken by the Revenue Board to restore the fugitive wife to the husband.

The law and usage of the country were slowly changing. The Hindus resented the tax they had to pay on marriage and death and urged the new administrators to abolish them. In spite of pressure from all sides these social ceremony taxes had to be maintained. The tax for the death of Raja Krisnachandra of Nadia was collected on 1 May 1789.⁴ Probably this was one of the last occasions when this tax was collected, as it was abolished soon after. The taxes on Marriage which went by the hated name *Marocha* was ultimately abolished around 1780.

The Mughal laws of inheritance was always a hindrance to the growth of property. The Badsah at Delhi was the owner of all lands, moreover he was the father and son to each one of his subjects. So on the death of an opulent subject the Badsah inherited the property and held the discretion whether to grant the heirs the whole or part or anything at all. The Badsah of course did not bother about small properties in distant lands where the Government officials expressed the will of the Emperor. With the greasing of the palm the son and the son only was given the right to succeed. Hence it is found that men of property always adopted a son and sometimes with unseemingly haste. On the death of Santiram Singh, the son of Ganga Govinda Singh, the grandfather adopted the grandson Prawn Kissen Sing, who was the son of Santiram, as his heir and successor.⁵ But the Nator inheritance however created a problem of a much bigger proportion. Ramjiban, the first Raja of Nator,

³Proceedings of the Revenue Board consisting of the whole Council of 12 July 1774, p. 5464.

⁴Proceedings of the Board of Trade (Commercial) Vol. 79 of 1st May 1789, p. 150.

⁵Proceedings of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue of 5th August 1778, p. 53.

adopted the son of his daughter, Ramkanta ignoring the claim of his nephew Debiprosad who was the son of his younger brother Bisnuram and the sole surviving male child of the family. As if this was not enough, on the death of Raja Ramkanta, the second Raja of Nator, his wife Rani Bhawani, ignoring the claim of Gouriprasad, the son of Debriprosad, adopted Ramkrishna, who was a son of the daughter of Kaliprosad, who had pre-deceased his father Raja Ramjivan. Gouriprosad and after his death, his son Gangaprosad made continuous complaints to the Company to correct this irregularity. Gangaprosad pointed out that under normal circumstances the Hindu succession laws precluded the adoption from the daughter's line if adoption from a son's line was possible.⁶ Gouriprosad however lost his case as Rani Bhawani secured the sanction of the Benaras Pandits who opined that the adopted son would inherit the property. This affair had an interesting epilogue when Shyamchand Chaudhury, eight-annas Zemindar of the Pargana Mymensingh and the district of Jehanguirnagore (Dacca), disputed his uncle's adoption of a son and demanded further four-annas property as his legitimate succession. This interesting matter has been elaborately recorded and discussed.

The law of Hindu succession in regard to adopted son as enumerated by the 30 Pandits of Benaras has been recorded on 15 November 1778.⁷ On 5 January 1779 Shymachand Chaudhury remonstrated against the law of succession as enumerated by the Pandits of Benaras. He said that according to the Hindu law of Succession, a son cannot be adopted to become the heir to the property, if one's own brother's line was still alive and living. Shyamchand pointed out that the Pandits of Benaras received Rs. 40,000 annually from Rani Bhawani. In his words, 'The Ranny also has an adopted son, whom she intends to establish in her own Zemindary' so the Pandits of Benaras have given an opinion suitable to her needs and requirement. The Ranny's recommendation was to the following effect, 'That although there be a son to the lawful brother yet the adoption of another is admitted.' This Shyamchand pointed out was quite contrary to the ruling given by the Pandits of Nudda that 'an adopted son is not lawful, while a brother's son is existing'.⁸ Benaram Pandit of Benaras acted, as it seems from the proceedings referred to above, as the Agent of Rani Bhawani. He

⁶Proceedings of the Revenue Department of 18th April 1781, pp. 1911-1929 and of 3rd April 1788, p. 23.

⁷Proceedings of the Revenue Department (Separate), Revenue Khalsa of 15th November 1778. Vol. 3, pp. 312-313.

⁸Ibid. of 5th January 1779. Vol. 4, pp. 41-53.

exerted certain influence on Hastings also. The Government upheld the decision of the Pandits of Benaras against those of Nadia. Yet there is no doubt about the fact that in Bengal the usage supported the Nadia Pandits. The examples are the following :—

- (1) Maharaja Nabakrisna adopted his own immediate brother's son.
- (2) Radhakunt Singh adopted his nephew who was the son of blood of Gunga Govinda Singh.⁹
Though many years later,
- (3) Lokenaut Nandy adopted the son of his cousin Baisnabcharan who was the son of Nrisingha.

The Mughal system was slowly giving way to the rationalisation of the new administration. It is not difficult therefore to assess the changes that was brought about, as the Company kept record of everything that happened. The Muslim rulers did not like their Hindu subjects to perform any festival except in the privacy of their own lodgings. Except the performance of the Suttee, which was not a festival, any description of a religious festival in Mughal Bengal in the eighteenth century is almost non-existent. The reason will be found in the 'Festival tax'. This tax is found in the '*Amany* accounts', and was collected from ancient times at a varied rate of 3 to 4 annas per annum on each pottah. This tax was collected with the 'Kutwallee' or Police tax each year. In the year 1787-88 the collection amounted to Rs. 661-8-0 paid by 3367 persons. The Government only kept Rs. 21 from this sum and the rest were disbursed for expenses of Hindu Festivals of Durga and Charrak Pujas in Aswin and Chaitra.¹⁰ It is evident that the English Company was not only encouraging Hindu Festivals but was patronising them by financial assistance. This change in attitude of the administration led to the liberalisation of the holding of festivals publicly, by the Hindus with particular emphasis on the Durga Puja in Aswin and the Charrak Puja in Chaitra. It will not perhaps be palatable to the Hindu Bengali to agree that their festivals were planned by the English also. The Durga Puja festival caught on but the Charrak Puja disappeared some 150 years after.

The Mughals had a tax on every thing which was surely very much resented by the people who laboured under them but which makes the

⁹Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 22nd April 1783, pp. 335-336.

¹⁰Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 21st May 1788, p. 218.

work of the biographer easier.* The Profession tax known as the *Meteherefeh* tax, listed all the professions in the city that were taxable caste-wise. Every new profession had to be registered, its caste defined and classified. This list was updated from time to time. When the Company took over, they defined the work of each profession-caste that existed in the city. It should be noted that the Profession tax was paid by the people of the low income group only who followed that particular profession, but when he acquired a farm or a Zemindary or made money in business or trade, he was not required to pay the tax. This was an important incentive to own a Zemindary or to start trading. Not to pay the 'Profession Tax' became the first step to attaining a status in the society. The Company abolished later this Profession Tax. The English Company also abolished the tax on teaching (*Moonshee*), may be at the suggestion of the Shovabazar Raja who in his earliest life was known as 'Nobo Moonshee' and had been a Persian teacher to the Company servants, including Hastings.

J. A. Harrington, Acting Collector of Calcutta, presented the list of Profession tax to the Revenue Board on 21st May 1788.¹¹

Castes :

Burn (Barna) Brahmin
Agurdanee Brahmin

Tantee
Joogee

Kamar
Naupit
Teylee
Tamboollee
Kansaree
Shankaree
Gundbuneek
Malee
Myra
Ahir

Professions :

Sacerdotal attendance to castes.
Receipt of primal offerings at functions and festivals.
Weaving
Weaving and sale of small carpenters' work
Ironmongery
Shaving
Sale of Pauns, betelnuts etc.
-do-
Brass and Copperwork
Shell work
Sale of spices
Flower culture and work
Confectionary
Sale of Milk

* Students who are still confused about Bengali castes may consult this list.

¹¹Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 21st May 1788, p. 261-263.

Guala	Sale of milk
Sooberna Bunneek	Sale of gold and silver bullion
Dhoba	Washing
Kaloo	Manufacture and sale of Oil
Barooce	Culture and sale of Betel-leaf
Cumboolea	Blanket manufacture
Gooree	Frying rice (Mooree)
Jelleah	Fishing
Chhoterh	Carpenter and joiners' work
Sekra	Gold and silver smith
Chasa-dhoba	Sifting grain
Mochee	Shoemakers' work
Baytee	Match work
Patoonee	Ferrying the river
Nurree	Manufactures of waxen rings
Cuppalee	Rope making
Hulwane	Confectionary.

'Besides the above, Shopkeepers, painters and women of the town pay generally without distinction of caste.'

The quick progress in the development of Calcutta after the confusion of the last days of the Mughal rule was welcomed by the community. The Revenue Department continued to record the progress. Major Tolley was allotted land for his canal in April-May 1777. The Alipore and Kidderpore bridges were constructed and opened extending the limits of the city. The Governor General himself bought a property beyond the Alipore bridge and lived there. A new Theatre opened in Chowringee followed by public houses in absolute English fashion complete with bar-maids and saloons. Old churches like the Armenian, the Protestant and the Mission Churches were repaired and repainted. The Dharamatolla Church, St. Andrew's Church and St. Paul's Cathedral were built adding grandeur to the scenery. The Hindus of Calcutta donated or sold land for the building of the churches to insure against the departure of the Christian foreigners. Calcutta was dominated by the Hindus who became the most trusted ally of the administrators. The Muslim aristocracy indulging in their pleasures could not grasp the change in the wind and fell behind. One example of a grandee's life style can be quoted from the Revenue Dept. Proceeding from which it will be found that the life of the Grandee was occupied by the very

large number of women in his household leaving him little time for the world outside and its problems. This is a familiar pattern as it is found that the Bengal Nawabs and their relations, with a few exceptions of course,* indulged in this life of pleasure and irresponsibility. According to M. Law, Sirajudoulla attended his concubines more regularly than attending the Durbar and the administration of the country. After him both Mirjafar and Miran followed the tradition carrying it to the most absurd extremes.

The example that will be quoted is of Golam Ghaus Khan of Nazerpore. His family consisted of two brothers, Hyder Cooly Khan and Yesaun Khan and their family. The three brothers were the descendents of the late Nawab Iuveen Khan. The two younger dependent brothers were as yet minors.

The family of Golam Ghaus Khan of Nazerpore

2 Brothers (minor)	..	2
A wife and 7 slave women	..	8
5 concubines and 19 slave women	..	24
3 daughters and 9 slave women	..	12
His mother and 19 slave women		20
2 mothers-in-law and 13 slave women	..	15
A sister and her son and 8 slave women	..	10
A half-sister and her son and daughters and 4 slave women	..	8
A grand mother and 4 slave women	..	5
Her son, his children and slave women	..	12
Grandfather's concubines	..	5
Father Nawab Iuveen Khan's concubines	..	5
and their slave women	.. 4	14
Needy dependents or Chulas	..	55
Total number of persons		185 ¹²

The hierarchy in the family can be found by the allotment of the slave girls which turns out to be very interesting indeed.

The mother	had 19 slave girls
The wife	„ 7 „ „

* Murshid Quli Khan, Alivardi Khan and Mirkasim.

¹²Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 27th December 1776, p. 5877.

The mothers-in-law	„	6.5	slave girls each
The Grandmother	„	4	„ „
The sister and her son	„	4	„ „ each
The concubines	„	3.8	„ „ „
The daughters	„	3	„ „ „
The grandmother's other son's family	„	2	„ „ „
The half-sister's family	„	1	„ girl each
Grandfather's and father's concubines	„	$\frac{1}{4}$ th	„ girl „

As the result of the new prosperity new nations were coming to Calcutta. Responding to a letter from Atchun Chinese, the Board of Revenue approved the starting of the first Chinese settlement in Calcutta on 19 June 1778 'as an encouragement to the industrious race of the People of China.'¹³

The Government reported the current prices from time to time. They were particular about the prices of the essential commodities and reported in January and June, 1788, as under :—

1. Dhauties—C. Rs. 1-8-0 to C. Rs. 2-8-0 per piece of $10 \times 2\frac{3}{4}$ hauts.
2. Chunam—C. Rs. 19 for 100 maunds.
3. Superior tobacco—C. Rs. 2-14-6 per Maund of 60 seers ($1\frac{1}{2}$ mds.) ..
4. Wheat—C. Re. 1 for 85 Seers.¹⁴

Current prices of Rice and Paddy all over Bengal

Districts :	1st Sort	Rice	2nd Sort	Paddy
Murshidabad	Mds. 0-15-8 ch	Mds. 0-20-4 ch.	Mds. 1- 0- 0	
Rajshahey	„ 0-25-8 „	„ 0-38-0 „	„ x	
Nuddea	„ 0-18-0 „	„ 0-20-8 „	„ 0-36- 0	
Calcutta	„ 0-14-0 „	„ 0-15-0 „	„ x	
Month—April (1788)	Price—Re. 1 (only) ¹⁵			

The price list also denotes growth of population in Calcutta. The pricee became dearer as it came nearer to Calcutta. While the best rice could be had at $25\frac{1}{2}$ Seers for a Rupee in Rajashahi it came down to 14 seers to a Rupee in Calcutta. Perhaps the growth of Calcutta was faster than

¹³Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 19th June 1778, p. 3160-3162.

¹⁴Proceedings of the Appendices of the Board of Trade of 23rd January 1788, p. 110-112.

¹⁵Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 4th June 1788 (Vol. 133), p. 60-61.

Kantababu liked it to be. He therefore retired to his ancestral home in Murshidabad as soon as he left the services of the Governor General, staying in Calcutta only as long as his cotton cloth business was running. He had seen the growing evils of the metropolis and tried to protect his family and particularly his son Lokenath from its effects. Baisnabcharan stayed with his cousin in Cossimbazar. Only Gocul or Gorachand stayed in the Calcutta house while Kantababu and Nrisingha kept going to and fro, up and down the river, from Calcutta to Cossimbazar which used to take 8 days according to William Hickey in flat bottomed boats because of the hundred sand-bars that had to be encountered on the way. Only a flat bottomed boat could ride over them, therefore all types of boats that were built for the river journey were always flat bottomed. In fact the horse-shoe part of the river between Murshidabad and Cossimbazar and from there to the broader part of the river in Mowllah Ghat was charted every year. The chart follows the river by the names of the bathing ghats. Starting with Kella (fort) ghat and then Doomba Comrah, Lallbaug, Bunamaleypore, Aunaisegunge, Moorah Gowah, Burrungunge, Chunacolli corner, Cossimbazar corner, (two inside ends of the horse-shoe) Gourdess Gaut, Calcapore, Burhampore Bazar, Major Handy's Butcher Khana, Dakorlah, Narrainpore, Burguteebie, Monkurrah, Hurlolpore, Nowaddur, Gopeenathpore and finally reaching Mowllah Ghat.¹⁶ But the river was dying, being gradually silted up and devastating floods became a regular visitor after the rainy season. Such a flood is recorded in the Calcutta Gazette of 29 September 1785 followed by an epidemic of Plague which devastated the city. The people fled leaving the dead, who were taken up in bullock carts and thrown into the river polluting it even further. The Calcutta Gazette records another cyclone and flood in 1787 when Major Dunn and his wife were drowned in the river. By 1802 Cossimbazar, the once beautiful city was turning into a jungle and had become the abode of tigers. The Company offered Rs. 10 for the killing of each tiger.¹⁷ The irrigation Department of the Company decided that the horse-shoe shape was the root of all troubles and started excavating a canal which would eliminate the circuitous route. The canal started in 1813 was completed by 1839 rendering Cossimbazar into a backward village three miles away from the river.

In spite of the depopulation, the Company continued to maintain its buildings in the Cossimbazar Factory. Simeon Droz was the chief of

¹⁶Revenue Dept. Proceedings of 23rd August 1782, p. 342-349.

¹⁷Nikhilnath Roy, *History of Murshidabad* (Lord Valentia's report), p. 259.

the factory in 1783 and was succeeded by J. I. Keighly. From 1787 the post was demoted to a Resident and was occupied by Thomas Harris (1788), C. R. Crommelin (1788-1789) and Thomas Brown (1789-1796).

The several buildings at the Cossimbazar Factory (1788) :—

1. Naccaud Connah.
2. Range of offices skirting the Western Ramparts, exclusive of
3. the Export Ware House.
4. 7 Godowns, West of the Factory House.
5. Weighing Godown.
6. Import Ware House.
7. Range of offices skirting the South Ramparts from South West angle to the stairs.
8. Range of offices on the East and West side of the Gateway.
9. Sorting Silk piece goods Godown.
10. Blacksmiths and the Carpenters work houses skirting the West Ramparts.
11. River Gateway.
12. Godown skirting the North-East Rampart.
13. Factory House.
14. Surgeon's House.

(list prepared on 13th March 1788).¹⁸

It is probable that the English and Gujarati societies in Cossimbazar came to depend on Kantababu more and more. He became the only person of importance residing at the place. The dispute that Thomas Brown, the English resident had with the weavers in 1789 could not have reached such heights, if the weavers were not patronised by Kantababu. As a retaliation, the Company adopted such harsh rules for the weavers that the prosperity of the Bengal silk industry was completely destroyed.¹⁹ The filature silk industry was also not capable of saving the dying industry by private production of silk. As the century drew to a close the best days of the silk trade became a myth of the past.

Through all these vicissitudes of fortune, Kantababu held his family very close. The death of the very intelligent third brother Krisnachandra in 1774 was a great tragedy. This also became the year from which

¹⁸Proceedings of the Board of Trade (Commercial) of 2nd April 1788, p. 29.

¹⁹Proceedings of the Board of Trade (Commercial) of 2nd October and 8th December 1789, pp. 29-43 & 117-120.

Kantababu became the object of harassment for the next six years. The family always worked as an unit though different persons were doing various types of transactions. All this time Kantababu made additions to his house in Cossimbazar. The *Khajnakhana* or the office-complex was completed first. A verandah and a few rooms were added to the old house to give it a more respectable look. After the Bijaygarh incident Kantababu made a separate house for the deity. He also dismantled a large portion of Chait Sing's house in Benaras and brought it by boat, setting it up near the *Thakurbari* calling it 'Chate Singher Dalan'. (The building of Chait Singh). This was the place where Kantababu and his descendents for 175 years held their *Punyahas* and *Durbars*, and met the highest representatives of the Government. This place served as the venue of social, religious, literary and musical gatherings. Kantababu lost his second brother Joyram in 1793, just a few months before his own death in 1794.

There are no books of accounts available from 1774 to 1784. The accounts books of 1784-85 or 1191 give the impression of a fairly large organisation. The accounts were compartmentalised into different departments. Of the four books, two are ledgers and two cash books, but all the four books of account are only parts of the whole account. There is no trace of at least two divisions namely, 'Personal and household accounts of Cossimbazar' and the 'Business or Trading account'. For the first time the 'Calcutta accounts' come to knowledge, which leads to the conclusion that the Calcutta accounts were kept separately.

Now the cash books will be discussed chronologically starting with the Calcutta cash book of 1191 or 1784-85.

● I. *The Calcutta cash book of 1191* which has already been utilised in the previous chapters will be taken up first. This account contains presumably all the expenses that were incurred in Calcutta. Income which largely came by hundis from Cossimbazar show that the centre of administration as well as cash-control was there. In 1784-85 the 20 year old Lokenath, soon to be termed as 'Maharaja', was left in Cossimbazar to look after the central funds, with the help of his cousin Baisnabcharan, while Kantababu was in Calcutta.

The whole of the cash book has been written by one person who had a beautiful handwriting though the way he had written the European

names is extremely confusing at times. The writer was a sophisticated man. He begins the book with the traditional turmeric and vermillion marks, but then writes a very fine unfamiliar sloka offering his salutations to the several Gods. Ganesha Girija Krisna Chandraaditya Maheswarah; Pita Guru Param Bramha Chitragupta Namastutey'. I salute Ganesh, Parvati, Krisna, the moon, the sun and the Lord Siva, along with father, Guru, the transcendental Bramhan and the God of Death. With the Bengali year he writes the English year and then in the day to day accounts records the day and both the dates. A typical top of the page if translated will look like this :

*Sri Sri Hari
San 1191

Today's date
Eng. 7 November
Income—

26 Kartick
Monday
Expenditure—'

This book of accounts has all types of expenses. It includes business transactions of cotton cloth (discussed in detail in Chapter V, Volume I), several payments made to the Europeans (discussed in the previous chapter), expenses incurred for farms, Zemindaries and Govt. servants, the expenses at the time of Hastings' departure (discussed in Chapter I) and also several household expenses.

From these pages it is found that Kantababu regularly bought 'Bahadoori Lakri' or wood for burning (coal not being there) and transported them by boat to Cossimbazar. The value of the goods were credited in Calcutta. On an average Rs. 800 to Rs. 1000 worth of Bahadoori Lakri was sold by Kantababu in 1784-85. The other item of income was the rental of the small rooms. He had, it seems constructed 6 or 7 rooms which he rented out for Rs. 2 at a time. The period of these rentals are not known. The collection of Rs. 34 in the month of Kartick was the highest in any one month. The people who took these rooms bears names denoting their up-country origin, such as Gobardhan and Bhabani Bhaskar, Asharam, Hayat, Garibullah, Lal Mohammud, Gaushee etc. The last four names are undoubtedly Mohammedan. The situation of these cottages also cannot be ascertained.

The larger sums in the income side came from several hundis as well as the sale of cotton cloth, woollens and silks of different varieties.

His Calcutta establishment also was quite efficient. He relied largely on two Brahmins who assisted him in his business transactions. They were so trusted and dependable that all loans and payments were made by them. The family of one of them continued for a long time to hold responsible jobs. Shyamlal Roy was the father or elder brother of Radhaballav Roy whose son Krisnanath Roy became the trusted Dewan of Maharaja Lokenath, after the death of his cousin Baisnabcharan. The Calcutta establishment and their salaries were as follows :—

1.	Shyamlal Roy		per month salary	Rs. 63
2.	Mansukh Chattarjya		„ „ „	Rs. 61
3.	Bhabanicharan Sen	Accountant	„ „ „	Rs. 16
4.	Isak Muhammad	Durwan	„ „ „	Rs. 4
5.	Chhandar Sing	Harkara	„ „ „	Rs. 4
6.	Khairulla	Peada	„ „ „	Rs. 4
7.	Gopee Chhatradhar			
	Umbrella Carrier		„ „ „	Rs. 3
8.	The new	Coachman	„ „ „	Rs. 3
9.	Jamiruddin	Peada	„ „ „	Rs. 3
10.	Nakari Daftari	Peon	„ „ „	Rs. 3
11.	Chhandar	Chabuk-Sowar	„ „ „	Rs. 3
The clerks were headed by :—				
12.	Radhamohan Ghosh	Clerk	per month salary	Rs. 7
13.	Radhakrisna Sarkar	„	„ „ „	Rs. 2
14.	Bhabanicharan Chattarjya,		„ „ „	Rs. 2
15.	Nakurdatta Biswas	„	„ „ „	Re. 1
16.	Chandra Daftari	Peon	„ „ „	Re. 1
17.	Kinkar Paik		„ „ „	Re. 1
18.	Shafalram Ghosh Goala	Cowherd	per month salary	Rs. 2
19/20.	2 Malis	Gardeners	„ „ „	Rs. 3-8-0 each
21/22.	2 Malis	„	„ „ „	Rs. 2-8-0 „
23-25	3. Masalchis	Lightingmen,	„ „ „	Rs. 3-8-0 „
26/33-8	Kahars	Servants	„ „ „	Rs. 3-0-0 „

Imamuddin the head coachman was included in the Cossimbazar establishment. Though he stayed in Calcutta at the time driving Kantababu's coach, his salary is not included. Probably he was quite old by now which necessitated the employment of a new coachman for the new horse that was bought for Rs. 30 only in the month of Baisakh.

34-35. 2 Sais	—horse carer	per month salary	Rs. 4 each
36-37. 2 Ghasiara	—grass cutter	„ „ „	Rs. 3 „
38. 1 helper		„ „ „	Re. 1

Boatman Deboo Manji who brought Kantababu from Cossimbazar was given a special 'inam' of Rs. 6 for conducting a safe and smooth journey.

In comparison with the Cossimbazar household of 1773-74 discussed in the last chapter of Volume I, this was a rather small but effective establishment. Kantababu it seems did not keep more men than he required for his absolute necessity. There was only one carriage in which he moved and may be more than one cow. The practice of feeding pigeons was regularly followed, but it is not possible to say whether they were kept in the house as was the custom of many 18th century Bengalees. In fact the hobby of keeping pigeons proved disastrous to many rich houses in the 19th century.

It may be kept in mind that everybody had their meals in the house, for which it is found that two types of rice were regularly purchased. The better variety cost $22\frac{1}{2}$ seers per Rupee while the ordinary kind was bought for 30 seers per Rupee. The cooking medium was ghee which was prepared in the house and mustard oil which was bought at the rate of 7 Mds. 20 seers per Rupee. The cost of tobacco and oil for bathing came to Rs. 2 per month. This item has been written as '*taila-tamakoo*'.

The other informations are also interesting. White paper for writing cost Re. 1 for 113 sheets ($4\frac{1}{2}$ dista), Bell metal (Kansa) gong which is necessary during *puja* and *arati* cost Rs. 1-8-0 per, seer, 2 pieces of this was bought for Rs. 4-8-0. Sandal wood was also necessary for the regular worship of the deity in Cossimbazar. On 12-18 Aswin, 3 Mds. 25 seers of sandal wood was bought at the rate of Rs. 1-10-0 costing Rs. 5-13-6 and sent to Cossimbazar. One of the most sophisticated items in cash book are the window-curtains for the western room. The buying of the material and getting them made by the tailor is faithfully recorded. The curtains cost Rs. 6 and the making charges were Rs. 3, under the circumstance, a very high price indeed. Fine palm-leaf mattings were used as bed sheets regularly. These fine mattings were often beautifully decorated and were both cool and comfortable to sleep on. Though these mattings went out

of fashion in Bengal for regular use, even then they are in great demand as the traditional bed on which the young married couple slept together on the first night of their marriage. The well decorated good quality best woven matting cost on 10 Jaistha 1191 Rs. 2 only. Medicine for Lokenath Babu, then called 'Arak' was made for Rs. 4 on 24-26 Agrahayana and on 12-13 Falgoon an ointment for the pain in hand of Kantababu himself cost Rs. 2. Gopee Napeet who was perhaps the same person who acted as the umbrella-bearer received Rs. 3 for cutting the hairs of his master on 27 Falgoon.

Coconuts were grown in Kantababu's garden in Ultadingi and were brought from there in a boat to the river being unloaded at Harinath Dewan's Ghat which was the shortest distance to the Chitpur house of Kantababu. Permit for this transport cost Re. 1, while loading and unloading cost Rs. 2.

The cash book shows that most of the Government taxes to the Khalsa was paid from Calcutta. Hence the payment of the quarterly taxes for the Chitpur and Hanspukur houses as well as the garden of Ultadingi has been recorded. The Revenue for Baharbund, Cantonagar and other Zemindaries were also paid regularly. The suit with Kaliprosad Ghosh led to heavy expenses which included the housing of witnesses who were brought over from Taherpur. The well known Barrister Traunton was engaged for this suit.

There is one item which is the only information of Kantababu's receiving money from the Treasury, the purpose of which has not been clearly described. On 14-15 Ashar or 25-26 June 1784 Kantababu received from the Treasury on account of salary of March, 1784, Rs. 967 and on account of Taxes for payment from January to April 1784 Rs. 680. This entry has not been repeated in any other month, making the conjecture that this was the salary that Kantababu received as the Banian to the Governor General, impossible. The sum of Rs. 967+Rs. 170 that is Rs. 1137 could be the salary, considered fit for the position held by Kantababu. His political character is quite clear in the accounts as has been described earlier in connection with the Europeans. Very few Indian grandees appear. The tips given to the barber of the Etmumdar of Hili and Moharar of Ganga Govind Singh looks important. The latter, known as Gadadhar Singh was paid Rs. 15 on the 4th Magh. Kantababu's close association with Gujarati merchants is proved by the

regular transactions with Bhaiya Manickchand and Bhaiya Naryan Gattee along with the other Calcutta merchants.

Always extremely religious, Kantababu became more immersed in religious practices with age. The cash book notes that the Guru of Kantababu and his brother, often called themselves 'Mohanta' meaning, chief of a religious order. Thus Bhaktananda Thakur becomes Bhaktananda Mohanta and Nrisinghananda Mohanta. At least in 1784-85 they were rather well looked after and the property they had acquired was managed by Kantababu, who regularly sent them the profits that accrued from the properties. It will not be wrong to assume that Kantababu bought these properties for the Guru and his family. The annual festivities in the Baisnab house were meagre. Most of the important ceremonies were performed in Cossimbazar and the Calcutta cash book records the Saraswati Puja and Doljatra or holi both typically associated with the boisterousness of the city. It is interesting to find that even a staunch Baisnab like Kantababu did not fail to worship the guardian deity of the city who is often called 'Kali-Kalkattawali'. Puja in the Kalighat temple was performed between 1-3 Magh, then again on 14 Magh, a special puja was performed costing Rs. 56. Whether the deity was worshipped for protection, after the departure of the Governor General or for the recovery of the health of the son and heir Lokenath is not known. As Lokenath was most probably married in 1192 the worship could even be a preliminary preparation for marriage. The *Dipauwita amabasya* or Diwali was celebrated between 5-8 Kartick. The decorations of light cost Rs. 9 only. No fireworks, as became customary later, was indulged in.

In spite of the ceremonies that Kantababu performed from time to time, his usual mode of religious worship, besides the daily puja of the deity in Cossimbazar, was in giving donations to the Brahmins. These small gifts of money covered the different groups of Brahmins situated in different places. The donations which started from the Dussera day continued till the end of the year.

30 Kartick

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. Mangaldas Bairagi of Nabadwip | —Re. 1 |
| 2. Ramapati Tarkasiddhanta of Ulla | —Rs. 4 |
| 3. Krisna Siddhanta Battacharyya of Benagram | —Rs. 4— Rs. 9 |

7—8 Agrahayan

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 4. Gobardhan Gossain of Bhajan Ghat | —Rs. 5 |
| 5. A Gossain of Calcutta (9-10 Agrahayan) | —Rs. 5 |
| 6. A Brahmin of Calcutta (-do-) | —Rs. 2 |
| 7. Udaychandra Gossain of Gibat (11-12 Agrahayan) | —Rs. 5 |
| 8. Paramananda Thakur of Benagram (13-16 Agrahayan) | --Re. 1—Rs. 18 |

13—16 Agrahayan

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 9. Debisankar Nayalankar of Guptapara | —Re. 1 |
| 10. Kalisankar Tarkachuramoni „ | —Rs. 3 |
| 11. Ramcharan Siddhanta „ „ | —Rs. 3 |
| 12. Ramnidhi Tarkabagish „ „ | —Re. 1 |
| 13. Rajaram Tarkabagish „ „ | —Rs. 3 |
| 14. Bhabanicharan Tarkapanchanan | —Rs. 2 |
| 15. Radhakanta Nayabhushan, „ „ | —Rs. 3 |
| 16. Gopal Bidyabagish „ „ | —Rs. 3 |
| 17. Raghunath Tarkabagish „ „ | —Re 1—Rs. 20 |
| 18. Ramkanai Bidyalandar „ Nabadwip | —Re. 1 |
| 19. Shibnath Bidyalankar „ „ | —Rs. 4 |
| 20. Shankar Bidyabagish „ „ | —Rs. 4 |
| 21. Gokul Tarkapanchanan „ „ | —Rs. 4 |
| 22. Radhanath Bidyalankar „ „ | —Re. 1 |
| 23. Ramabhadra Siddhanta „ „ | —Rs. 4—Rs. 18 |
| 24. Ramshankar Tarkabagish „ Bansberia | —Rs. 3 |
| 25. Ramkishore Nayapanchanan „ | —Rs. 3 |
| 26. Jagannath Bidyalankar „ „ | —Re. 1 |
| 27. Bhadrakalpa Tarkabagish „ „ | —Re. 1 |
| 28. Ramjay Bidyabachaspati „ Ulla | ---Rs. 3 |
| 29. Ramcharan Nayabagish „ „ | —Rs. 4 |
| 30. Padmalochan Tarkachuramoni „ | —Rs. 4 |
| 31. Thakurdas Tarkabhushan „ | —Rs. 4 |
| 32. Nilmani Bidyalankar of Santipur | —Re. 1 |
| 33. Ishan Bidyalankar „ „ | —Re. 1 |
| 34. Raghunath Tarkabagish of Dakshineswar | —Rs. 2—Rs. 27 |
| 35. Ratneswar Bidhyalankar of Guptapara | —Rs. 2 |
| 36. Kalicharan Nayabachaspati of Belpukhuria | —Rs. 2 |
| 37. Ramkanai Tarkabagish of Nabadwip | —Rs. 3 |
| 38. Ishan Bachaspati of Santipur | —Re. 1 |
| 39. Krisnanath Gossain of Kumarkhali | —Rs. 2—Rs. 10 |

13—16 Agrahayana (contd.)

	B. F.	Rs.102
40. Mathur Mohanta	of Srikhanda	—Rs. 5
24—26 Agrahayana		
41. Nrisinghananda Mohanta	„ „	Rs.21
42. Durgaram Bachaspati	„, Guptapara	Rs. 3
43. Kaliprosad Tarkasiddhanta	„, Santipur	Rs. 4—Rs. 33
27—28 Agrahayana		
44. Murarimohan Gossain	„, Pinsoa	Rs. 5
45. Krisnachandra Mohanta	„, Srikhanda	Rs. 3
46. Raghunath Nayabachaspati	„, Tribeni	Rs. 3
47. Ramshankar Bidyalankar	„, Kamalpur	Re. 1
48. Shambhunath Bhattacharyya	Nabadwip	Rs. 4
49. Bahurikanta Gossain	„, Santipur	Rs. 5
50. Bhabanishankar Tarkasiddhanta		
	of Guptapara	Rs. 4
51. Shyam Bachaspati	of Tribeni	Re. 1
52. Krisnachandra Gossain	of Srikhanda	Rs. 5
53. Gokul Bairagi		Re. 1 — Rs. 32
30 Agrahayana		
54. Gokul Bidyalankar	of Santipur	Rs. 2
55. Bijayram Nayabagish	„ „	Rs. 2
56. Ramhari Bidyabagish	„ „	Rs. 2
57. Shyam Tarkabhushan	„, Guptapara	Rs. 2
58. Gangadhar Tarkasiddhanta	Tribeni	Rs. 3
59. Gokul Tarkalankar	„, Kashipur	Rs. 5
60. Ishan Tarkabhushan	„, Belpukhuria	Rs. 4
61. Bhabanicharan Tarkapanchanan		
	„, Bansberia	Rs. 4
62. Kalicharan Gangooli	„ „	Rs. 2 — Rs. 26
1—2 Pous		
63. Jagannath Gossain	„, Santipur	—Rs. 4
64. Gopinath Gossain	„, Santipur	
and		
65. Ramnath Gossain		—Rs. 4
66. Bhabanishankar Nayabagish	Belpukhuria	—Rs. 3 — Rs. 11
67. Shibaram Bachaspati	of Santipur	—Rs. 4
68. Shyamsundar Bidyalankar	„, Debagram	—Rs. 4
69. Pranakrisna Tarkapanchanan	Santipur	—Rs. 5

70. Gobindadas Bairagi	„ Cossimbazar	—Rs. 5
71. Krisnakanta Gossain	„ Santipur	—Rs. 5 — Rs. 23
11—12 Pous		
72. Mayaram Brajabashi	„ Calcutta	—Rs. 2
73. Udaychandra Gossain	„ „	—Rs. 5 — Rs. 7
16—17 Pous		
74. Golakchandra Gossain	„ Girati	—Rs. 5
75. Badanchand Gossain	„ „	—Rs. 2
76. Nityanandadas Bairagi	„ „	—Re. 1 — Rs. 8
23 Pous		
77. Bhaktananda Mohanta and Nrisinghananda Mohanta		—Rs.60 — Rs. 60
26 Pous		
78. Sadananda Gossain	of Abhirampur	—Rs. 2 — Rs. 2
29 Pous		
79. Jnanmohan Chakravarty	of Nandanpur	—Rs. 2
80. Jagneswar Bhattacharyya	of Saidabad	—Rs. 2
81. Madhusudan Tarkalankar	of Guptapara	—Re. 1
82. Jagannath Tarkapanchanan	Tribeni	—Rs. 7— Rs. 12
14 Magh		
83. Sankar Bachaspati	of Kaugachi	—Rs. 5
84. Ramsundar Siddhanta	of Silhatti (Sylhet)	—Rs. 8
85. Uddhabdas Bairagi	„ „	—Re. 1
86. Ramdeb Nayalankar	„ Chumhari	—Rs. 4 — Rs. 18
23—24 Magh		
87. Gadadhar Tarkabagish	„ Santipur	—Re. 1
88. Mohan Chakravarty	„ Saidabad	—Rs. 5 — Rs. 6
9 Falgoon		
89. Gokul Nayalankar	of Chumhari	—Rs. 3
90. Ramnath Gossain	„ Santipur	—Rs. 2
91. Ramjoy Gossain	„ „	—Rs. 2
92. Sankar Tarkabagish and his son Krisna Das	„ Pidira	—Rs. 4 — Rs. 11
10—12		
93. Gokul Gossain	„ Singerkone	—Rs.10
94. Nimai Bhaduri	„ Saidabad	—Rs. 1 — Rs. 11

12—14 Falgoon		
95. Dukkaharan Siddhanta	,, Bramhapore	--Rs. 4
96. Mohanchand Gossain	,, Khardaha	--Rs. 4 — Rs. 8
16—17 Falgoon		
97. Shivaprosad Bhattacharyya	Bhatpara	--Re. 1
98. Jasodananda Gossain	,, Madhuban	--Rs. 5 — Rs. 6
22—23 Falgoon		
99. Gokul Tarkabagish	,, Ulla	--Rs. 4
100. Krisnanath Gossain	,, Santipur	--Rs. 4 — Rs. 8
1—3 Chaitra		
101. Premchand Gossain	,, Khardaha	--Rs. 4
102. Kebalram Nayapanchanan,	,, Bansberia	--Rs. 2
103. Krisnachandra Goswami	,, Srikheta (Puri)	--Rs.25 — Rs. 31
8—10 Chaitra		
104. Thakurdas Tarkabachaspati	Madara	--Rs. 2
105. Premananda Gossain	,, Nashipur	--Rs. 2
106. Krisnanath Gossain	,, Santipur	--Rs. 2 — Rs. 6
		Total Rs.421

The reason for this elaborate exercise is to show the extensive nature of the donations. All the Baisnaba centres then prevailing can also be marked. Srikheta or Puri and Silhatti or Sylhet were on the regular route of Baisnaba pilgrimage. In Bengal, Nabadwip and Santipur were by far the most important Baisnaba centres, followed closely by Guptapara. The extensive settlement of the Baisnaba scholars in Ulla (near Krisnagar in Nadia) prevailed till the early part of the twentieth century. Kantababu distributed his donations widely. The honorarium was fixed according to the respect commanded in the society. Thus the Brahmins received variously from Rs. 5 to Re. 1. Special donations were of course made to the family of the Guru of Kantababu and to some exceptional scholars and lawgivers. The donations to the distant scholars of Puri and Sylhet were fixed at a higher denomination. The question is that, why did Kantababu choose 106 Brahmins only. In other words why did he stop short of the mystic number of 108 which is considered to be highly auspicious, similarly his total donations should have been Rs. 432 which is only eleven Rupees shorter than the auspicious mystic figure (108×4) 432. It may be possible that evolution of 108 as an auspicious mystic figure, developed later or the accountant may have

missed writing the two names who were paid Rs. 11 between them. Even in 1784-85 the practical religiousness of Kantababu was evident.²⁰

II. *In the Zemindaran ledger of 1191* also the religious mind of Kantababu cannot be overlooked. He clearly divided his properties even in 1784-85 into secular and religious. The deity he had brought after the holocaust of Bijaygarh in 1781 became the presiding deity of his family and properties were delineated for worship. Sri Sri Laxminarayan Jieu was therefore considered as the owner of some Zemindari properties and it was given a page in the Zemindaran Ledger where the donations made by the public were recorded. Besides the lakh of Rupees as income from properties, the deity received the donation of Rs. 99-6-10 from the public who customarily paid any amount between a paisa to a Rupee when they came to pay their respects to the deity. Kantababu also paid a sum of money to his Guru from his income of Baharbund Pargana. He paid Rs. 1554 in the year 1784 of which Rs. 1000 was paid on 1st Aswin and Rs. 554 on 19th Aswin, both being paid to Nrisinghananda Mohanta. He was also paid travelling expenses amounting to Rs. 202.

The Zemindaran employees were better paid than the others. This was for the difficult task they had to undertake. There are no designations so it is not possible to know what jobs were entrusted to each of them. The names are listed according to their salaries.

1. Ganganarayan Basu	—Rs.	25 per month
2. Nrisingha Biswas	—Rs.	25 „
3. Krisnananda Majumdar	—Rs.	20 „
4. Mohan Sarkar	—Rs.	13 „
5. Chhagan Majumdar	—Rs.	10 „
6. Tilak Mancha	—Rs.	10 „
7. Trilochan Bhattacharyya	—Rs.	10 „
8. Badrinath Das	—Rs.	10 „
9. Gorachand Roy	—Rs.	10 „
10. Chaitan Pal	—Rs.	10 „
11. Ramkumar Pal	—Rs.	7 „
12. Krisnaram Banki	—Rs.	5 „
13. Ramgopal Majumdar	—Rs.	5 „

²⁰The Calcutta cash book of Kantababu of 1191 (1784-85).

14. Ramchandra Daptari Peon	—Rs.	2-8	„
15. Khudiram Kahar	—Re.	1-8	„
16. Janki Doomni (a female Dome)	—Re.	1	„
<hr/>			
Total Rs.		165	

The speciality of the remuneration of the staff was that almost every body received various additional remunerations throughout the year. Sometimes the extra payment was for performing the religious duties for their dead parents or for marriage of their daughters or for special duties performed successfully. It can be presumed that the Zemindaran staff were largely the collection staff who also kept account of the rents as well as other income and expenditures connected with the collection. The account from Calcutta shows that at the time the payments of taxes and rents to the Government were controlled from Calcutta.²¹

III. *The petty cash ledger of the same year, 1191 (1784-85)* is also available. The small cash transactions of the Khajnakhana are recorded here. The transactions being of an unimportant nature very little details are found. The *jumma* or income merely says 'received from' and the *kharach* or expenditure says '*Guzronne khod*' or 'given by the Master himself' or 'given under the instructions of the master himself.' The people involved in this ledger are small men often working class people like the milkman, betel-vendor, washerman or the tailor. The amount of money in which each of them are involved are often small. While Kantababu receives money from 49 people, his payments only concern 9 persons. From a study of this list it can be assumed that Kantababu advanced money to a large section of people for various reasons. For instance Piroo Gadhawalla (the man with the ass) removed 20600 bricks and 2100 wooden planks for which he was paid Rs. 12-6-0. Kanta Manjhi (boat man) and Deboo Manjhi repaid loans, while Loharam Rakshit had a running account for supplying provisions. When the Master or Kantababu did not advance money himself it was done by Mansukh Chatterjee. As there is nothing about 'interest' it can be presumed that the advances were only for a short term. The purpose was perhaps spreading the area of influence and also keeping an easy line of supply. As the system continued throughout the centuries and became a part of the administrative style of the Zemindars (being only

²¹The Zemindaran ledger of Kantababu of 1191 (1784-85).

abolished after 1954), it is certainly interesting to trace the practice before the Permanent Settlement. The system worked efficiently where the administration was strong and humane. The main idea was to select the people necessary for some work and pay him small amounts of money from time to time as an advance to be easily recovered. These men often remained extremely grateful for the advantage and became a part of the working staff, though they did not receive any remuneration. These men had their own vocation or trade which they improved by the association, thus both the parties gained by this partnership. Even the 'Ghatain' or Government's man incharge of the Ferry has found a place in the list.

A summary of the ledger is given below

<i>No.</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>
1.	Kalyan Basak (Cloth supplier)	Rs. 2811- 8- 0	
2.	Haat Sweeper	„ 247- 7-15	
3.	Munafa (Profit) A/c	„ 9- 6- 0	
4.	Radha Ghosh Goala (Milkman)	„ 373-14- 5	Rs. 338-13-10
5.	Anandiram Ghosh „ „	„ 84-11- 0	
6.	Ram Ghosh „ „	„ 35- 3- 5	
7.	Gourab Saha Panwala (Betel leaf Man)	„ 2- 1- 5	
8.	Ramdhan „ „	„ 82-13- 5	
9.	Loharam Kaloo (Oilman)	„ 655- 0- 5	
10.	Loharam Rakshit (Grocer)	„ 4275- 5- 0	„ 4123- 3- 5
11.	Gopee Pashari (supplier of goods & vegetables)	„ 1821- 0- 5	„ 847- 2 -0
12.	Chamroo Hanjai	„ 501-11-10	
13.	Chhagan Mondol	„ 814-12-15	
14.	Uddhab Pal	„ 106- 8- 0	
15.	Bhandarkhanar Kharach (expenses for stock)	„ 4706-11- 0	
16.	Radhamohan Chuttar (Carpenter)	„ 153- 9-10	
17.	Abharashi Raaj (Bricklayer)	„ 306-11-15	
18.	Gazagiram Chharak (Heavy goods lifter)	„ 116-12- 0	
19.	Aakool Boraola (gunny bag man)	„ 1- 4- 0	
20.	Jobahar Ghashiara (grass-cutter)	„ 208- 0- 0	
21.	Baburam Moodi (Grocer)	„ 954- 0- 5	„ 1018- 8-10
22.	Goushi Abashey	„ 84- 4-10	
23.	Imamadi Kharoala (Hay supplier)	„ 22- 3-10	
24.	Badi Roy Khuchra Boraola (retail bagman)	„ 1- 6- 0	
25.	Motroo Bakuro	„ 5-10- 0	
26.	-do-	„ 29- 4- 0	
27.	Nidhoo Dhoba (the washerman)	„ 1- 4- 0	
28.	Bootan Darji (the tailor)	„ 134- 6- 0	„ 137-11- 0
29.	Kanta Manjhi (boatman)	„ 8- 8- 0	
30.	Chhagan Mistri (handyman)	„ 20- 4-10	
31.	Asaf Khan tamwakoo (tobacco-man)	„ 13- 0- 0	
32.	Gossaindas Manjhi (boatman)	„ 361- 9-10	
33.	Ghashi Gadhawala (Ass-man)	„ 21-11- 0	
34.	Piroo Gadhawala (-do-)	„ 12- 6- 0	
35.	Saadi Khan	„ 5- 0- 5	„ 47- 0- 0
36.	Paran Kaimakar	„ 84- 3- 0	
37.	Imamadi Nakash (boat maker)	„ 21- 9-10	
38.	Imambux Lalbundh	„ 1- 4- 0	

39.	Deboo Manjhi (boatman)	,,	19- 9- 0	
40.	Sumeruchand Thakur	,,	2- 0-10	
41.	Panas Tabas (?)	,,	27- 6- 5	
42.	Nimai Bhakat	,,	30- 6-10	
43.	Laxman Pal (for jute)	,,	26-12- 0	
44.	Chandrasekhar Mukujya	,,	637- 3-10	,, 600- 7-10
45.	Lalchand Chaudhuri	,,	21- 6- 0	,, 16- 0- 0
46.	Radhey Baroojya	,,	32-14- 0	,, 40-11-15
47.	Fatick Ghatian (the Ferry Conductor)	,,	408- 9- 0	
48.	Niamut Chinioala (sugar supplier)	,,	28- 4- 0	
49.	Mankey Dutta	,,	49- 5- 0	

The above list establishes the petty nature of this account. The total of the income came around Rs. 20500 while the total expenditure was around Rs. 7170. In short only about Rs. 15000 was really involved in this account. The involvement of a larger number of people from outside the provinces establishes the fact that people from all over India flocked to Murshidabad and its surroundings. The involvement of the Mohammedans was a regular affair. They had specialised, the tending of Elephants and horses and were employed as Coachman, Gariwan and Sais. Ghashiara (cutting grass) was their regular vocation as well as supplying hay (kharoala). Tailoring was also a Muslim vocation. In the Hindu family the Muslims were regularly employed at this time. The politics of the time had not yet created the abyss of mutual suspicion raising the religious class consciousness in the common people.²²

IV. *The Zemindaran Cash-book of 1191 (1784-85)* has been already utilised in describing the properties that were held by Kantababu during the year. The cash book has been maintained according to the year of the Zemindars which was from Sraban (1784, July) to Ashar (1785, June). Apart from the record of daily income and expenditure for running the Zemindari, the cash book contains additional informations, which depicts Kantababu's religiousness as he paid to his Guru, Nrisinghananda Thakur (who eventually became the head of the order on the death of his brother Bhaktananda), Rs. 1554 in two instalments from the income of the Baharbund Pargana. The payments were made in gold mohurs which served the purpose of the note. The cash in hand was therefore maintained in Mohurs which differed in price in conformity to the place of their manufacture. Thus the Dacca or the Patna Mohur was different in price. The accounts were however kept in the non-existing Sicca Rupees which maintained the difference in the price level. It can be said with some certainty that as gold was not yet popularly used for ornaments.

²²Khajnakhana Ledger of Petty Cash of 1191 (1784-85).

its character as a legal tender was fully effective. A gold Mohur's full value was 16 Sicca Rupees and calculations were made accordingly even if the payment was made in Dacca Mohurs which was priced at Sicca Rs. 14-8-0 or Narayani Rupees which was 9% less than the Sicca Rupee. Though the calculations seem complicated they were effectively used without any difficulty. As an example, the way in which money came from Baharbund may be considered.

The date is 19 Aswin, 1191, Friday. The collection from Pargana Baharbund and other adjacent properties on the day had been recorded to be Rs. 15037-4-10. It was brought by Mansingh Roy and six other *barkandaz* who were accompanied by four *paiks*. Total money accounted was Rs. 15177 of which Rs. 15101 was the collection and Rs. 76 paid as travelling expenses. Rs. 17 being returned, the balance remained Rs. 15160, which was divided as under:

In Sicca	Rs. 13284	—83 full and a quarter gold Mohurs
„ note sicca rate Rs. 13		—1300
„ Sanat rate Rs. 6-9-0		—105
„ Arcot		—279
„ Others		—162
„ small dimensions		— 30
		<hr/>
		Rs. 15160- 0- 0
minus batta		122-11-10
		<hr/>
		Rs. 15037- 4-10

Another collection was made on 28 Pous from Baliapur* amounting to Rs. 1241-6-5 which was collected as under:—

In Sicca	Rs. 40
„ note Sicca	„ 7
„ Sanat	„ 1251
„ Daccai money	„ 10
„ small dimensions	„ 16
	<hr/>
	Rs. 1324-0- 0
minus batta	82-9- 5
	<hr/>
	Rs. 1241-6 -5

* Now the Ranigunge area of Asansol in Burdwan Dist.

Payments were often made by a Hundi. On 27 Pous the rents of Baharbund and Kantanagar were paid by Hundi at Calcutta amounting to Rs. 10,000, the Hundi was paid through Dharmchand Karamchand Babu. Another Hundi for the rents of Baharbund and Kantanagar was paid on 5 Ashar 1192 through the same Dharmchand Karamchand Babu for Rs. 5000 payable in Calcutta. The Zemindaran cash book in this way gives the details of the collection and payments from Sraban 1191 to Ashar 1192.²³

It is quite clear from these accounts that though all transactions were held in the non-existent Sicca, the actual legal tender was the gold Mohur, the bank note, the *tanka* of various dimensions and smaller coins for which a 'batta' or difference in price had to be calculated and the amounts reduced to the rate of exchange which was the 'Sicca'.

V. *The ledger of 1194 or 1787-88* gives very little information. The only explanation that can be offered is that the accounts were further subdivided into different cash books and ledgers. As this was the year when Kantababu started afresh the cotton cloth trade which could have resulted in further fragmentation of the accounts. The ledger headings refer generally to the household expenses, though the salary of the employees are no longer shown here. Similarly the food and clothing expenses of the household do not find a place. Curiously the daily income from Haat-Sripur only is credited in this ledger. Possibly Kantababu, grouped certain incomes and expenditures together. From each unit an amount was taken for his personal expenses. This ledger by no means gives any idea of the income of Kantababu but only relates to certain expenses at Cossimbazar.

Without the guidance of the previous accounts where a full picture of Kantababu's household is available, it is impossible to know anything from this account.

Kantababu had in the meantime established a 'Samajbati' (A Baisnab custom of establishing houses for community singing and community staying and feeding) in Saidabad. His own deity was established in his own house, whose expenses came under the head 'God's

²³Zemindaran Cash book of 1191-92 (1784-85).

worship in my own house'. Kantababu also paid the rental of the houses occupied by his Guru and his family.

The state of the ledger is not at all happy. An atmosphere of uncertainty prevails in the pages. There are totals not completed, additions not totalled, items written in high haste, expenses written on income side then the word 'expenditure' is scribbled on the top. Generally only the date and the amounts are written under the 'expense' column without a word about the item. All this is quite a departure from the previous books of accounts.

A summary of the ledger heads are given below.

Ledger heads	Income	Expenditure
1. God's worship in my own house	Rs.	38- 9-12-2 Kara
2. Samajbati	,,	56- 8-10-2 ,,
3. Death time expenses (Moutadi)	,,	105- 2- 0-0 ,,
4. Expenses of worship	,,	25-11-17-2 ,,
5. Rental and expenses for the house occupied by Thakurmahasaya	,,	913- 8- 3-2 ,,
6. Miscellaneous expenses	,,	1145- 0- 1-2 ,,
7. Personal expenses	,,	1050- 3- 1-2 ,,
8. Imarat-khana (Building Dept.)	,,	51- 1- 0-0 ,,
9. -do- labour expenses a) women	,,	477- 0-10-2 ,,
b) men	,,	78- 7-10-1 ,,
10. Carpenter's expenses a)	,,	52-14-17-2 ,,
b) his assistant in Kartick	,,	1- 0- 0-0 ,,
11. The Mohar Mahoorce's expenses	,,	687-11-15-0 ,,
12. Expenses for the gardens	,,	203- 0-15-0 ,,
13. Expenses for the boats	,,	68- 2- 0-0 ,,
14. Purchases of daily necessity from the Haat	,,	115-15- 0-0 ,,
15. -do- -do- from market	,,	133-13- 1-3 ,,
16. Expenses for the carriages	,,	15-10- 5-0 ,,
17. Daftar expenses (stationery)	,,	7- 4-15-0 ,,
18. Marriages	,,	149- 0-10-0 ,,
19. Chowkidaree expenses	,,	182- 8- 0-0 ,,
20. Cow dept. Expenses for cowdungs	,,	29- 3-17-2 ,,
21. Zemindaran expenses of paiks, peadas & kahars	,,	919- 1-10-0 ,,
22. Expenses of stables	,,	180- 4-16-1 ,,
23. Annual Sradh ceremonies (Ekoddista)	,,	44- 7- 7-2 ,,
24. Brick making	,,	8- 5- 0-0 ,,
25. Income from Haat Sripur	Rs. 2098-11-3-3	
26. Income from Giridhar Shah and Swarup Chandia Poddar	,, 4616-12-3-3	
	Rs. 6715- 7-7-2	Rs. 6739-11-17-3

From the very few details provided it is found that the number of orchards remained the same as reported earlier. The salary of the

gardeners are not included in this account. Similarly there were the same number of boats but the salary of the boatmen are not in this account. The only European name in this account is that of the perennial 'Smith Shaheb', whose boat repair expenses were paid by Kantababu. The Zemindaran expenses relate to the payments made to the paiks, peadas and kahars for bringing remittance from the different Zemindaries particularly Baharbund. The regular curtain making expenses of the different Katcheries, show that at least one English habit of having curtains in the Zemindari offices was practised by Kantababu. These expenses are of course very small.

Regarding the income side, the market of Sripur offered daily income. The market was open seven days of the week and did not close for a single day in the year under review. The income from Giridhar Saha, who probably took the *ijara* or lease of the Chunakhali market, was also collected daily. Giridhar Saha or Shah (Gujrati) retired on 8 Magh 1194 and from 9 Magh 1194 Swarup Chandra Poddar paid the daily dues. Here also as in the case of the market there was not a single holiday in collection.

The income of Rs. 6715-7-7-2 karas are squared off against an expenditure of Rs. 6739-11-17-3 karas.

The expenses in the ledger under items 8, 9, 10 and 24 suggest that a building was being constructed. Items 3 and 18 show that the Baisnab custom of helping others by financial grant at the death and marriage was already an established practice. The expenses under item 20 was for preparing cowdung cakes which were used as fuel. This was some improvement perhaps from using only wood for fuel. The annual Sradh ceremonies suggest three separate functions. It is not known who besides his parents was honoured. The Mohar Mohoree's expenses can be related to the remittances that were sent to Calcutta, where Kantababu lived during the year. All money was reduced to Gold Mohurs for easy carrying. The Mohuree received his dues.

VI. The other account of the year related to the *cotton cloth trading* has been already discussed in some detail. The total trading of Kantababu in the year under review i.e. 1194 or 1787-88 reached very high figures. As the transactions have already been discussed there is little to add here. The commerce with the European and Indian merchants reached a high

level. The only mentionable matter in the cash book and the ledger of 1194 is that the 'Guru' family of Srikhanda was now headed by Nrisinghananda Mohanta who came to Calcutta and was paid for his expenses Rs. 288 (4 Baisakh, 14 April). He was paid a pronami of Rs. 100 (6 Baisakh, 16 April). The object of his visit was to collect money for the Mahamahotsava to be held in Srikhanda. He was paid Rs. 1900 (10 Baisakh, 20 April) for this function. The house of Kantababu in Calcutta was called Ganesh-Kothi (Ledger p. 44) obviously to propitiate the God of business, the elephant headed Ganesh. The cloth industry put the washermen in a very important position. Three of them namely Sankar Dhoba, Magan Dhoba and Laxman Dhoba were retained at the salary of one gold Mohur (Rs. 16) each per month.

A lot of of Certificates which were the harbingers of the Govt. Promissory notes were bought and sold and pledged. For instance Chaitanya Charan Sen pledged his certificate of Rs. 14000 for only Rs. 9482-11-0 (11 Jaistha—22 May). Buying of certificates could mean loss in investment also. For example a certificate was sold on 11 Aswin (25 Sept) amounting to Rs. 12,000 which had earned an interest of Rs. 1040. Thus the certificate valued at Rs. 13,040 was sold for Rs. 11,186-14-0 incurring a discount of Rs. 1853. The Bank discount was however fixed at 1%. A hundi of Rs.-5000 being placed in the Bengal Bank, Mr. Mee deducted Rs. 50/- only (5 Jaistha, 16 May). Under similar circumstances a private person would deduct 2.26% (11 Aswin, 25 Sept.). The cost of travelling long distances varied from season to season as the movement was by boat only. On 11 Baisakh or 21 April when Nursing Nandy travelled from Calcutta to Cossimbazar it cost Rs. 600.

It is interesting to note how the English words were seeping into the Bengali language. Words like, certificate, permit, contract, note etc. are found quite frequently. Another word 'gandrell' used in connection of big dimension Bank notes could be a slang for the word 'general'. The 'gandrell' notes, it is found could be one of Rs. 5000. Two such notes are mentioned bearing numbers 1089 and 1471. Even Rs. 500 worth notes were called 'gandrell' notes.²⁴

VII & VIII. *The business cash books of 1195 (1788-89) and 1196 (1789-90)* follow the same pattern, except that over and above the 'gandrell'

²⁴Kantababu's ledger of 1194 (1787-88).

notes the 'Hindustan notes' also find place in transactions. All the notes were however numbered (19 Baisakh 1195 or 28 April 1788).

IX. *The Khajnakhana cash book of 1195 (1788-89)* has been severely damaged by insects, of which only from 17 Kartick to 30 Chaitra or 31 October 1788 to 10 April 1789, is in existence. Even this part is mutilated and is in a bad condition. What little is revealed of Kantababu's household is extremely interesting. The accounts were now separated. The Calcutta accounts were quite different from the Cossimbazar accounts which in its turn were divided into several compartments. The Zemindary accounts were separated from household accounts though the household lived on money advanced from the Zemindary accounts. Similarly the petty accounts were dependent on the income from the Haat and Bazars. The commercial transactions or the business accounts were kept separate. There was also a personal account in which was included what Kantababu considered his personal income and expenditure. In the income side, the Calcutta house rents, the income from the Ultadingi and Panchannagram gardens etc. were included. The expense side had his personal servants, Chhatradhar or umbrella bearers, Chabuk-sowers or despatch riders, his Coachman, his boats and the Manjhis. The canvas has become much bigger in the course of the decade. Though the pattern is familiar, yet the dimensions have increased to a great extent.

In the cash book of 1778-79 it is reassuring to find all the old employees of Kantababu particularly Krisnanath Roy of Srikhanda and Mansukh Chatterji of Calcutta. Raghunath Gora was also very much there acting as the reliable hand through whom a lot of money was transacted. Ishan Choudhury and Kalyan Poddar are two other reliable persons from the older times. None of them however find a place in the salary list and were probably included in other cash books. Similarly the personal staff of Kantababu are conspicuous by their absence. Though Gossaindas Manjhi and Pandit Manjhi have been paid their expenses from this account, they were not a part of this account where there is no mention of a single boat or their Manjhis. These were undoubtedly included in a separate account.

This account speaks of the household though the food expenses are no longer found here nor are there the mention of any maid servants who were also there. This is therefore a truncated cash book not only physically but also in its subject matter.

In spite of these limitations the cash book is a very interesting document. That Kantababu had been devoutly religious has been found while discussing previous cash books also. This year was no exception. Now he had established a 'Samajbati' in Saidabad where he had established Braja Krisna Das Bairagi to perform the religious duties of the 'Bhagabat reading' and Kirtanas daily. For this establishment he paid Rs. 4 per day and a little more during the festive occasions. In the month of Pous, Golak Thakur and Mathurananda, two religious men from Brindaban Dham came to join the festivities and blessed Kantababu when they went back (28 Pous/9 January) and were paid Rs. 40 for their journey. On 8 Magh a junior member of the 'Guru' family of Srikhanda came to the Samajbati. Anupchandra Thakur was paid Rs. 6 for his expenses (8 Magh/19 January). Bholanath Pujari of Brindaban came on 11 Falgoon (20 Feb. 1789) putting up in the Samajbati which became a place of congregation of the Baisnabs.

The Baisnab ceremonies however continued to be performed in Kantababu's house. The Bhagabat *path* (reading from the Bhagabat) and Sankirtan were regular features whenever a festival was celebrated. The Bhagabat reading which ended on 7 Aghran (20 Nov. 1788) cost Rs. 74. The big Baisnab *Mohotsab* (Feast) was celebrated in early Chaitra on the day after the Doljatra or Holi Festival. The Doljatra being the day of advent of Lord Sri Krisna Chaitanya (also known as Chaitanya Mahaprobhu or Sri Gouranga) is specially auspicious to the Baisnab. The *Mahotsab* was held on the day following at a cost of Rs. 160 which included money given away to the Baisnabs who took part in the Mahotsaba (*Mochhab* is the current slang of the word) and technically known as Baisnab-Bidai. The Thakurs of Srikhanda were sent Rs. 40 for the occasion (6 and 18 Chaitra/17 and 24 March).

All the festivities were held for the deity Laxminarayan Jieu Thakur. Kantababu in his Will provided that Rs. 19000 will be paid, for the religious festivities of the deity Laxminarayan and other religious ceremonies of the house, from the income of his Kantanagar Pargana. So the worship became an important function of the household. Rs. 4 only was spent per day for the *puja* and *bhog*. On special occasions like the Ratha Jatra on 9 Ashar, Nabanna (new rice) on 13 Aghran (3 Dec./20 Aghran a/c), or Doljatra on 4 Chaitra (15 March) special 'bhog' was arranged. On the occasion of the marriage of Goculchandra the youngest of Kantababu's brothers and Gurucharan, the nephew (son of Joyram)

both of whom were married on the same day, a special *puja* and *bhog* was given to the Deity on 27 Falgoon (8 March 1789).

Kantababu performed all the '*Ekoddistta Sradh*' ceremonies to propitiate his forefathers. He also performed the *Ghatotsarga* on the *Mahabishuba Sankranti* which fell on 27 Chaitra (7 April 1789), by which he offered water and shade to the forefathers. The umbrellas which were given away on this occasion were collected from Dahapara.

There is no reference to the performance of any other *puja* to any other deity except Saraswati, which *puja* was performed on the 16 Falgoon (20 Feb. 1789) at the cost of Rs. 2 only. The Bhagabat reading rates were now slightly higher, Nrisingha Tarkacharya was paid Rs. 3. Abhoy Charan Siddhanta was paid Rs. 3 and Jagannath Bhattacharya was paid Rs. 2 only on the 17 Kartick.

Lokenath and Baisnabcharan however visited temples in the neighbourhood. The temples they visited and paid '*pronami*' at, belonged to the house of late Bankim Roy whose son most probably was Jagamohan Roy. The other temple visited belonged to the house of Kirtiram.

The Saraswati *puja* or the worship of the Goddess of knowledge had some meaning, as most of male members knew at least three languages namely, Bengali, Persian and Sanskrit, some had the knowledge of the English language as well. Gokulbabu's Persian books were leather bound for Rs. 5 (18 Kartick/1 Nov. 1788) and a few days later Lokenathbabu and Baisnabcharanbabu jointly bought eight Persian books costing Rs. 250 from Issaque Jahan Khan (the names in simple transliteration sounds like:—Kitab, Bota, Jahib Asif, Taim-i-nama, Divan Jahiree, Daulatgahi, Kham Soyeeo Nizami and another) on 23 Kartick/6 November. It is interesting to note that throughout the cash book there has been no attempt to write Lokenath as a Maharaja, rather he continued to be addressed as 'Lokenathbabu' only. The hilarious beginning of using unfamiliar epithets as has been seen in the Calcutta accounts of several years ago was quite absent here.

This account does not have the details of the rice, milk and provisions supplied to the household which may have found a place in the personal account book which is lost. But the names of the persons who made such supplies move through the cash book from time to time. Anandiram

Ghosh, the principal milk supplier (2 Kartick/4 November) is there as well as Baburam Moodi, the grocer. Gopee Pashari (22 Kartick), Gour Saha Panwala (17 Kartick), Balaram Ruikar (cotton man) (21 Kartick) also make brief appearances.

Balaram Ruikar had a special assignment of making bridal beds, as both Goculbabu and Gurucharanbabu got married (10 Aghram). The accounts of these marriage ceremonies conclusively prove that even in 1789 the outlook was still modest and the expenses were kept to a minimum. Let it be put like this. As soon as the marriages were settled Narsingbabu went to Calcutta, gave Nazr of Rs. 16-8-0 to 'Col. Governor' on 3rd November 1788 and requested leave for Goculchandra babu who was still working in the Amin Daftar (20 Kartick). Kantababu sent Mansukh Chatterjee to inform Jagat Seth of this happy tiding (7 Aghran/20 November 1788). Dinen Roy of Nator was informed by a letter (18 Aghran/1 December). Seth Abhaychand, the second son of Maharaja Swarupchand presented the brides with two pairs of jewelled(জুড়োয়া) bracelets which were brought from Mahimapur by Gobindadasbabu, a senior employee of the Jagat Seth on 28 Pous (9 January). Now the ceremonies actually relating to marriage started. Both the girls were from Jabagram (slang: Jaogaon) in Burdwan, with the 52 village society to which Kantababu belonged. Gokulbabu was being married to Kanakmani the daughter of Gopi Nandy and Gurucharanbabu was being married to Janakimani daughter of Haran Pal. On 16 Falgoon (25 February 1789) Imam Bux Peada carried various coloured silk sarees, *jores* (silk dhoti worn by the groom) and several coloured 8 cubit doties costing Rs. 19-6-0. On 17 Falgoon (26 February) Rs. 20 was paid as the travelling expense of the relations. On 21 Falgoon (2 March) Raghu Gora was paid Rs. 6 for *Thubra* expenses (the last food eaten by the groom as bachelor). On 25 Falgoon (6 March) Re. 1 was given for *Adhibas*. Indranarayan Malakar was paid Rs. 10 for fireworks on 26 Falgoon (7 March). The marriage ceremony took place on 27 Falgoon (8 March) the cost being Rs. 47-10-0. Meer Jaman Jamadar who accompanied the two bridegrooms and also led their horses (written: *tattoo*, meaning pony) was paid Rs. 20-2-0 for his expenses. Various clothing for the ceremony cost Rs. 26-2-0 on 28 Falgoon (9 March). The *Baubhat* or the feeding function on the day after the arrival of the brides was held at Narsinghababu's house. Narsing had purchased the Jagat Seth house at Cossimbazar so the ceremony was held there on 29 Falgoon (10 March) costing Rs. 122-6-15. On the next day 30 Falgoon, the Brahmins

who performed the marriages were paid Rs. 22-8-10. On 1 Chaitra (12 March) groups of Brahmins were fed costing Rs. 14-8-0. The musicians were paid Rs. 32, the same day. Another group of musicians were paid Rs. 11 the next day (2 Chaitra/13 March). While the festivities continued, the expense for the food of the musicians came to Rs. 38-15-0. After the marriages were over the friends and relations were paid travelling expenses to go back to their homes. *Kutumba* (relations and friends) *Bidai* came to Rs. 58 (2 Chaitra/13 March). Kantababu paid a special salutation fee to Haran Pal who was then considered an important leader of the society amounting to Rs. 51. The expense for travelling, to make the payment was Rs. 6-7-10 on 3 Chaitra (14 March). Now Kantababu started the usual practice of sending money to the different groups of Brahmins settled in various places. The marriage account was finally brought to a close on 27 Chaitra (7 April) with an account of Rs. 145-7-10. The total expenses of the two marriage functions came to Rs. 632-9-5 only. Mr. Hastings' harkara came on 16 Chaitra (27 March). He was paid Rs. 3 for his trip after being fed sumptuously.

Informations about mango appear in the cash books from time to time. On 30 Chaitra (10 April) Kantababu bought mangoes worth Rs. 39 which were grown locally and also purchased Rs. 30 worth of mangoes from Maldah spending a total of Rs. 69 on mangoes. It will be interesting to know whether the fame of the Murshidabad mangoes in preference over those of Maldah was a recent happening, patronised by the later Nawabs of Murshidabad. It seems from the accounts that Maldah mangoes were equally popular to people settled in Murshidabad in 1789*. Even when sending mangoes to England a few years ago Kantababu did not show any preference for the Murshidabad mango, rather with difficulty he despatched 50% of the cargo with Maldah mangoes.

Kantababu's household in 1195 was a considerable organisation. The personal expenses were of course not shown there. In spite of the fact that the list related to the joint family or the collective household, it is a long list to contend with.

There were a few important changes. Three pundit-Brahmins were retained annually. Two Kabiraj or physicians were in the regular band of retainers as well.

* In the 20th Century such an event will be impossible to conceive.

1. Radhakanta Tarkabagish	—Pundit-Brahman	—Rs.	5 per month
2. Balaram Bandopadhaya	— -do-	— „	15 „ „
3. Sevakram Vidyalkar			
Jyotiskar, Astrologer	— -do-	— „	10
4. Sridhar Kabiraj	— Physician	— „	8
5. Ramnarayan Kabiraj	— -do-	— „	8

There was another, Ramani Kabiraj, who used to accompany Kantababu whenever he went to Baharbund. While he stayed with him he received Rs. 15 per month and of course free food and lodging.

The household was headed by the watch-and-ward staff who were the cash carrier, body guard and the chief defence personnel. Two such persons were now employed, while the Punjabi Muslim Jamadar was responsible for the outside of the house, the warlike Brahmin from Uttar Pradesh was the peace-keeper and protector, inside the house.

6. Meer Zaman	Jamadar	—Rs.	25 per month
7. Jagannath Pande	(protector of the inside the house)	—Rs.	20 „ „

The clerical staff followed :

8. Debnath Roy	Munsi	— „	20 „ „
9. Giridhar Chakravarty		— „	9 „ „
10. Shiboo Mukherjee		— „	6 „ „
11. Debi Sarkar		— „	5 „ „
12. Nandadulal Chakravarty		— „	4 „ „
13. Chhabindas babu		— „	3 „ „
14. Swarup Mukherjee		— „	2 „ „
15. Jagannath Vyas		— „	2 „ „

The management of the house was left to:

16. Jibanram Das Tahaliya	—Rs.	5 per month
17. Sanatan Bhandari	— „	4 „ „
18. Narayan Chowdhury	— „	3 „ „

The worship of the Deity was left to :

19. Ramkrishna Thakur	Pujari	—Rs.	4 per month
20. Sambhoo Thakur	„	— „	3 „ „
21. Nrisingha Thakur	„	— „	1-8-0 „

The lighting was left to :

22. Nidhiram Mashalchi	— „	3 „ „
23. Brindaban Mashalchi	— „	1 „ „

Under the formidable leadership of Meer Zaman Jamadar, there were a large retinue of *peadas*.

24. Roshan	Peada	Rs.	6	per month
25. Ram Singh	„	„	6	„ „
26. Puchharam	„	„	5	„ „
27. Sambhu Pande	„	„	3	„ „
28. Guruprasad Pande	„	„	3	„ „
29. Hriday Ram	„	„	3	„ „
30. Arjun	„	„	3	„ „
31. Imam Bux	„	„	3	„ „
32. Malla Khan	„	„	3	„ „
33. Rahaman	„	„	1	„ „
34. Rahim	„	„	1	„ „
35. Jaychandra	„	„	1	„ „

The long list of Khidmatgars follow :

36. Jitoo Khidmatgar		„	6	„ „
37. Debi Sardar	Khidmatgar	„	4	„ „
38. Bodi Ram	„	„	4	„ „
39. Narayan	„	„	3	„ „
40. Pratap Singh	„	„	3	„ „
41. Moti	„	„	3	„ „
42. Ganesh	„	„	2	„ „
43. Gopalram	„	„	2	„ „
44. Bunkee	„	„	2	„ „
45. Nitai	„	Re.	1	„ „
46. Radha	„	„	1	„ „
47. Balaram Sarkar	„	„	1	„ „
48. Khudiram Kahar	„	„	1	„ „
49. Bankoo	„	„	1	„ „

The miscellaneous work was done by others :

50. Panchoo Thakur	Cook	Rs.	3	„ „
51. Khoshan Thakur	„	„	3	„ „
52. Chandoo Maniar Chakar	Servant	„	2	„ „
53. Lochan Napit	„	„	3	„ „
54. Kirti Napit	„	„	2	„ „
55. Motiram Pankhabardar	Fan Carrier	„	3	„ „
56. Dasarath Aranibardar	Wood supplier	„	1	„ „
57. Gokul Dhoba	Washerman	„	4	„ „
58. Bhikhari Malakar	Garland supplier	„	2	„ „

59.	Niloo Ghosh Jalwala	Water carrier	Rs. 12 per month
60.	Shiboo Khansama	Servant	„ 3 „ „
61.	Manick Hazra	Cleaner	„ 1-8-0 „
62.	Baburam Hazra	„	„ 1-8-0 „

The cows were looked after by :

63.	Kinkar Gope	„	3 „ „
64.	Ishan Gope	„	3 „ „

The elephant or elephants were under:

65.	Golam Muhammad Mahoot and his two assistants	Rs. 18 per month
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The stable was under:

66.	Muhammad Rashid Ahmed	Coachman	„ 10 „ „
67.	Hatoo	Gariwan	„ 10 „ „
68.	Sonaram	„	„ 4 „ „
69.	Mansaram	„	„ 4 „ „
70.	Kale Khan	Sais	„ 3-8-0 „
71.	Golam Maoka	„	„ 3-8-0 „
72.	Beshan	„	„ 3-8-0 „
73.	Mian	„	„ 3-0-0 „
74.	Hinga	„	„ 3 „ „
75.	Budhoo	„	„ 3 „ „
76.	Fateh Muhammad	„	„ 3 „ „
77.	Dina	„	„ 3 „ „
78.	Meherban	„	„ 3 „ „
79.	Jan Muhammad	„	„ 2 „ „
80.	Chedi Dorji	Saddler	„ 2 „ „
81.	Bootan Dorji	„	„ 2 „ „

Amongst outsiders those who used to get regular remuneration are:

82.	Loharam Rakshi	Village-guard	Rs. 10 per month
83.	Ananda Ghosh	Milkman	„ 4 „ „

Barkandaj were recruited from time to time temporarily by Meer Zaman Jamadar. On one occasion, which was the only occasion during the year under review, 5 Barkandaj were paid Rs. 15 or Rs. 3 each.

The gardens and orchards were well looked after by the malis or gardeners. All the malis had fixed assignment to a garden.

84.	Khoshan Sardar	Head Mali	Rs. 3-8-0 per month
85.	Hari	Mali	„ 2-5-0 „ „
86.	Babu	„	„ 2-5-0 „ „
87.	Keshab	„	„ 2-5-0 „ „

88.	Doman	Mali	Rs. 2-5-0 per month
89.	Chhagan	,,	2-5-0 ,, ,,
90.	Ganga	,,	2-5-0 ,, ,,
91.	Banamali	Jhhaukhola Bagicha	,, 2-5-0 ,, ,,
92.	Ishan	do	,, 2-5-0 ,, ,,
93.	Gobardhan Mali	Ganga Sitapur Bagicha also	,, 2-5-0 ,, ,,
94.	Nisha known as Sannyasidanga	Bagicha	,, 2-5-0 ,, ,,
95.	Ramkanta Mali	Sibdanga Bagicha	,, 2-5-0 ,, ,,
96.	Krisnakanta Mali	do	,, 2-5-0 ,, ,,
97.	Padma Mali	Krisnapongar Bagicha	,, 2-5-0 ,, ,,
98.	Kangali Mali	Sreepur Bagicha	,, 2-5-0 ,, ,,
99.	Keshra Mali	Banamalipur Bagicha	,, 2-5-0 ,, ,,
100.	Mohon Chokra	Chunakhali Bagicha	Re. 1-0-0 ,, ,,
101.	Bodi Mali	Madapur Bagicha	Rs. 2-6-0 ,, ,,
102.	Gobinda Mali	Majhida's Bagicha	,, 2-5-0 ,, ,,
103.	Gokul Mali	Hatoo Sahar Bagicha	,, 2-5-0 ,, ,,
104.	Motiram Mali	do	,, 2-5-0 ,, ,,
105.	Ramdhan Mali and others Muradbag, Wroughton's Bagicha		,, 6-0-0 ,, ,,
106.	Sanatan Mali and others Khagra, Gokul Babu's Bagicha		,, 4-0-0 ,, ,,

Total of the wages come to Rs. 438-8-0 per month.

If another Rs. 170 and odd can be considered to be the salaries of his personal staff then the total salary can be estimated to be around Rs. 600 per month. The Zemindaran salaries are exclusive and has not been taken into consideration here but would be around Rs. 400 according to the accounts of the other years. It can be safely estimated that Kantababu easily paid Rs. 1000 or thereabout as monthly salary to his various kinds of staff.

Now Kantababu had eleven instead of ten *Bagichas*, moreover he was managing Mr. Wroughton's Bagicha at Muradbag and Gokulbabu's Bagicha at Khagra. The number of malis are almost the same and their rates have become uniform.

The accounts of 1195 are in many ways comparable to the accounts of 1176. Both give rather an extensive account of the staff employed by

Kantababu. In between 19 years have passed and Gurucharan whose birth had been recorded in the 1176 account, got married in the 1195 account. Very few employees are found to have continued through this period. The emphasis on travelling by waterways or boats are undoubtedly waning away. The Chabuksowars and chhatradhars had gone out of fashion. Even then curiously the standards of 1176 are closely comparable to 1195. One year seems to be the continuation of the other. It is necessary to emphasise that during the intervening years Kantababu had been the Banian to the Governor General. It seems that Kantababu's life style was not in any way affected by his high position, since 1195 seems to be the most normal and natural extension of 1176. The life pattern was the same, but in 1195 the accounts are more complicated because of the variegated establishments that necessitated divisions. The organisation understandably has become more efficient after nineteen years.²⁵

X. The last detailed accounts during the life time of Kantababu, *is the ledger of 1199 which is generally known as the outstanding ledger* and has been discussed earlier. It is found from this ledger of 1792-93 that the accounts of the brothers were now separate. The money advanced to them and not realised is shown in the outstanding ledger. For example:—

Name	Income:	Expenditure :
Narasing Babu		52523-12-16 $\frac{3}{4}$
Baisnab Charan Nandy		10215-15-15
Lalmohan Nandi		59039- 6-10
Baranasi Ghosh paid his outstanding dues	17023-7-5	

It is found from the ledger that Nrisingha Ghosh and Krisna Nath Roy acted as the Vakeels of Kantababu. The outstanding accounts of the Europeans have already been discussed. Undoubtedly this ledger proves the farsight in Kantababu.²⁶

XI. *The personal ledger of 1200 (1793-94)* presents a comprehensive picture of the household, reminiscent of 1176 (1769-70). The efficiency with which this ledger is prepared marks the improvement in the

²⁵The Khajnakhana cash book of 1195 (1788-89).

²⁶The Outstanding Ledger of 1199 (1792-93).

accountings system as well. It is evident from the record that the costs were higher than five years ago. Kantababu had decided not to migrate to Calcutta nor to go there very often even for business, so the expenses of the transportation department has been largely curtailed. Now the expenses of the brothers and the nephews were completely separated so the household expenses shown in the ledger practically related to Kantababu's family alone. The expenses in the ledger has become impersonal. It is not possible therefore to know whose marriage or first rice (annaprasan) ceremony expenses have been related to, in the ledger.

This ledger also describes the expenses of the Sradh ceremony of Kantababu confirming that Kantababu died between the noons of 9th or 10th January 1794 (28 and 29 Pous, 1200). Kantababu laid down in his will that no extravagant expenses should be performed in any such ceremonies in his family. During his Sradh it is found that Lokenath strictly adhered to his father's wishes.

It is evident from the ledger that Kantababu left a well organised household which maintained its calm and order, even on the death of the head of the family. The clarity and smoothness of the accounts are almost unbelievable, particularly when it seems that a little confusion would not seem unnatural when the house lost its master. If the Sradh expenses were not there it would have been impossible to know that a great calamity enshrouded the family. Here the ledger reminds the reader, of the 1176 ledger which had no impression of the famine that was raging in the country. Kantababu not only developed an unfrustrated attitude himself but also trained his family well. The neatness and the distinctiveness of the ledger is reminiscent of Kantababu himself, and therefore leaves a strong suspicion that it was being personally supervised by none other than Baisnabcharan Nandy.

Before taking up the details of the ledger it is necessary to give a summary of the ledger heads first. The index shows a slight progress in the Bengali alphabets, which yet far from the later centuries' modernisation, was at least better than 1176. The vowels ee (ই) and ae (এ) were now recognised as letters (Previously they were used but not considered as letters), U (উ) had not yet developed as a letter though it was extensively used in the language. In the consonants ঞ (jha) and ত্ৰ (ttha) are found

but থ (tha) is eliminated. The alphabets as found in the ledger will be as under :—

ক খ গ ঘ
চ ছ জ ঝ
ড ঠ দ ধ ন
প ফ ব ভ ম
শ র হ
অ ই এ ও

The use of palatal 'ttha' (ঠ) in place of the dental 'tha (থ) seems to be very interesting indeed. The family of palatal letters, none of which has been found in the past, must have emerged soon after this experiment. The palatal 'sha' also comes under the camouflage of অ্ অ্ (a a). Probably every body knew what sound should emerge from those letters which was 'Sri Sri'.

The development of the script also presents interesting challenge. The influence of the Persian script which wrote from right to left was still there. Thus, though the Bengali script went from left to right, the letters bore the Persian tradition and many letters instead of being written from the left began at the right side. This gave a different look to the script which changed gradually and slowly with the introduction of Sanskrit and English, the writing of both the alphabets of which, always began on the left side. Over the century the look of the Bengali alphabets changed so much and became so rounded like the English alphabet, that it now needs a specialist to read the 18th century Bengali which is virtually the same language.

A summary of the ledger heads will be the best way to begin the examination of this ledger.

Ledger head :	Income	Expenditure :
1. Worship of Sri Sri Laxminarayan		
Deva, deity		Rs. 655-10- 5
2. General fund book	Rs. 59736-0-5	674- 5- 5
3. Sri Sri Samajbati expenses	94-1-0	„ 418-12- 0
4. General Puja and Worship		„ 94- 0- 0
5. Annual Sradh ceremonies (Ekoddista)		„ 979- 6- 5

6. Salutations to Brahmins		Rs.	287-12- 0	
7. Expenses for the lodging of the Guru (Thakur Mahasaya)		,,	716-14-17½	
8. Misl. Expenses		,,	6745- 7- 7½	
9. Loan and gift account		,,	1454- 0-10	
10. Personal expenses		,,	6508-12-15	
11. Building department expenses		,,	669- 2-10	
12. Garden and Orchard department expenses		,,	1460- 4- 0	
13. Boat expenses		,,	788- 2- 2½	
14. Stable expenses		,,	1137-12- 0	
15. Cow-house expenses		,,	730-15-15	
16. Rents		,,	80-12- 0	
17. Stationery		,,	43- 5-10	
18. Panchananda (?)	Rs.	120-9-10	,,	101- 0- 0
19. Kashidan (?)		,,	56- 7- 0	
20. Unspecified expenses		,,	137- 2- 0	
21. Expenses of Annaprasan (First rice ceremoney)		,,	853- 6- 5	
22. Expenses of Marriage		,,	1029- 8-15	
23. General Salaries	Rs.	56-6- 0	,,	607- 0- 0
24. The accounts of Brindaban Kunja	,,	283-8- 0	,,	3107- 4- 0
25. Buying and selling of goods	,,	8033-2-5	,,	9321- 6-10
26. Batta expenses (commission)		,,	88- 6- 0	
27. Sradh Ceremoney of Kartababu (The master)		,,	16,205-13-17½	
28. Zemindari expenses		,,	5,950- 1- 0	
29. Satoo Haldar representing Debi Charan Sarkar of Jiagunge and Goalpara	Rs.	2050-9-10	Rs.	2050- 9-10
30. Gurudas Poddar, shop-owner in Sripur	,,	3008-1-12½	,,	3,021-10-10
31. Shibaprasad Mukhopadhaya of Khagra, shop-owner in Kalikapur	,,	1187-2-5	,,	1,202-15- 0
32. Mohan Sen, Grocer (Moodi), shop near Company's 'Kuthi'	,,	81-6-0	,,	81- 0- 0
33. Biswanath Sannyal of Khagra	,,	244-0-5	,,	243- 2-10

34. Radha Ghosh, Milkman of Belaichandi	Rs.	312- 5-15	Rs.	343-14-10
35. Gopee Posharee (general merchant)	„	660-14-15	„	636- 0- 0
36. Paban Pal, (potter)	„	249-12- 5	„	241- 0- 0
37. Loharam of Sripur (oilman)	„	329- 2- 0	„	165- 4-10
38. Sadabadi Kagaji (paper maker)	„	128- 1-10	„	128- 0-10
39. Burhottomi Kagaji (-do-)	„	70-11-10	„	70-11-10
40. Parag Choudhury, shop-keeper in Gorabazar	„	148- 8-15	„	148- 8-15
41. Laxman Pal, Kumar (potter)	„	3-15-15		×
42. Kamyadi Dhoonia (cotton beater)	„	4- 0- 0	„	4- 0- 0
43. Sadaradi Patwar (jute broker)	„	94- 6- 5	„	88- 6-10
44. Hingan Jab Dorjee (tailor)	„	75- 8-15	„	70- 8- 0
45. Chatran Khem Dorjee	„	3-15- 0	„	3-15- 0
46. Bhikari Kamar (ironmonger)	„	51- 2-10	„	55-12-10
47. Shovani Rifukar (mender)	„	20-11- 0	„	17- 0- 0
48. Kanai Kamar (ironmonger)	„	64- 4-15	„	51- 4-10
49. Nath Behara Charan Behara (water carrier)	„	101- 5- 5	„	107- 8-10
50. Kanai Mistri (Boat repairer)	„	82-10-10	„	82-10-10
51. Sekh Sultan Tamakoowala (Tobaccoman)	„	45-11-10	„	85-11-10
52. Kalisankar Malakar (garlandmaker)	„	14-10- 0	„	5- 6- 0
53. Badi Kamar of Ektarpara (ironmonger)	„	4-12-10	„	4-12-10
54. Dwandri Golshaoo	„	20- 0- 0	„	10- 0- 0
55. Panchanan Mandal of Nengtakhali	„	193- 9- 0	„	64- 0- 0
56. Nimai Mandal Kharwala (Hay supplier)	„	55- 0- 0	„	45- 0- 0
57. Bara Kaoshi (?)	„	260- 0-10	„	225- 0- 0
58. Mohan Chunari (lime supplier)	„	178- 0-15	„	188- 9- 0
59. Shekh Saykooshi Lakriwala (wood-supplier)		×	„	91- 0- 0

60. Kadir Baksh Chamina Baksh (leather supplier)	Rs.	169- 9- 0	Rs.	169- 9- 0
61. Ramkanta Nag of Parosh	,,	1954- 8- 0	,,	951- 0- 0
62. Chhagan Mandal Narawala (cow-food supplier)	,,	14- 1- 0		×
63. Sakan Mandal Narawala (-do-)	,,	15- 0- 0		×
64. Mohan Mandal Narawala(-do-)	,,	16- 7-10	,,	×
65. Durga Charan Kayal (paddy supplier)	,,	18- 1-10	,,	28- 1-10
66. Satkari Chhapbanda (printer & binder) of Kantanagar	,,	9- 0- 0	,,	4- 0- 0
67. Ekkari Saha of Sherpur	,,	152-13- 5	,,	152-13- 5
68. Hassanuddin Narawala (cow food supplier)		×	,,	100- 0- 0
69. Dharmadas Baroojya	,,	40- 0- 0	,,	40- 0- 0
70. Sankardas Jahoori (precious stone merchant)	,,	1054-11- 0	,,	1054-11- 0
71. Swarup Raj (brick layer)	,,	5- 0- 0		×
72. Kashinath Hota of Saidabad		×	,,	0- 8- 0
73. Jakir Lakriwala (wood supplier)	,,	2- 0- 0		×
74. Loan Book	,,	193- 0- 0	,,	2404- 4- 0
75. Dasababu of Kalikapur	,,	88- 9- 5	,,	88- 9- 5
76. Hatoo Mistri (handyman)	,,	31- 0- 0	,,	4- 0- 0
77. Balaram Saikar (Sekra) of Sripur (goldsmith)		×	,,	104- 5- 0
78. -do- (silver utensils repair account)		×	,,	1294-13- 0
79. Baidyanath Mistri Barhai (handyman)	,,	70- 9- 5	,,	54-15- 0
80. Nishan Sardar	,,	124- 8 -5	,,	124- 8 -5
81. Radhamohan Mistri Barhai (handyman)	,,	57- 2-15	,,	57- 2-15
82. Farid Tahabaldar (wood cutter)	,,	66- 8-15	,,	66- 8-15
83. Ghousi Arakash	,,	37-12-10	,,	37-12-10
84. Fagoo Beldar	,,	43-11- 5	,,	43-11- 5
85. Land purchase account	,,	×	,,	17- 6- 5
86. Ramji Tattoowala (pony-man)	,,	17-13- 0	,,	17-13- 0
87. Durga Kamar (ironmonger)	,,	10- 2- 0	,,	10- 2- 0
88. Lalchandra Mahato	,,	56- 0-10	,,	48- 0- 0
89. Khatoo Chaudhuri Khotta, kumar (potter)	,,	34- 0- 0	,,	34- 0- 0

90. Banchharam Malo	„	28- 0- 0	„	28- 0- 0
91. Thakurdas Agoori	„	68-12- 5	„	68-12- 5
etc. other minor accounts.				

The salary accounts follow. The personal servants are individually mentioned while the departmental servants are mentioned within the expenses of that department. For instance, it is not possible to know the name or number of gardeners (mali) who were allotted to each garden. The names of the orchards and gardens (Bagicha) do not appear in the ledger also. Only the month to month expense on salary account has been shown in the ledger so that the expense on gardening account is not confused with salary account.

Even a cursory glance at the salary accounts will reveal that Kantababu's household had grown considerably.

Salaries for the Cash Room				Rs. 477-13-10
1. Nandadulal Chakrabarty	Rs. 10 per month	Rs. 120-0-0		
2. Krisnachandra Sarkar				
Cash keeper	„ 10 „ „ „	120-0-0		
3. Kashinath Chakrabarty	„ 8 „ „ „	96-0-0		
4. Swarup Mukujya				
(7 months 20 days)	„ 4-8-0 „ „ „	33-13-10		
5. Ramkrisna Chakrabarty				
Parakhiya (2 months 15 days)	10 „ „ „	15-0-0		
6. Bidur Chandra Parakhiya				
(9 months 15 days)	„ 6 „ „ „	57-0-0		
7. Anup Daftari	„ 3 „ „ „	36-0-0		
Salaries for the Accounts Dept.				Rs. 264-0-0
8. Durgacharan Roy	Rs. 10 per month	„ 120-0-0		
9. Jnankrisna Bhaduri	„ 7 „ „ „	84-0-0		
10. Ram Kumar Baroojya	„ 5 „ „ „	60-0-0		
Salaries for 'Munshis'				Rs. 360-0-0
11. Radhamohan Ghosh	Rs. 15 „ „ „	180-0-0		
12. Debnath Roy	„ 15 „ „ „	180-0-0		
Salaries for the 'Kabirajs'				Rs 552-0-0
13. Rajaram Kabiraj	„ 30 „ „ „	360-0-0		
14. Adhar Kabiraj	„ 8 „ „ „	96-0-0		
15. Ramanarayan Kabiraj	„ 8 „ „ „	96-0-0		

The patronage of the medicine-men is followed by the patronage of Sanskrit learning. Even in 1793-94 the new wind of education is discernible. A scholar called Paramananda Thakur Pundit is engaged at Rs. 5 per month to teach the boys of the house. Presumably Paramananda taught only Sanskrit and Bengali. The Persian teaching was not neglected either. Two teachers were attached to the house for this purpose. The gentleman in no. 18 could be an Armenian named Catchick, who could be engaged to teach English.

16. Paramananda Thakur

Pundit	Rs. 5 per month	Rs. 60-0-0	180-0-0
17. Pochhe Mian Akhand	„ 6 „ „	„ 172-0-0	
18. Seikh Lachman Katick	„ 4 „ „	„ 48-0-0	

Two Calcutta merchants were kept on monthly pay also.

19. Hari Sett (for 4 months)	Rs. 12-8-0 „ „	„ 50-0-0	185-0-8
20. Shyam Sett	„ 10 „ „	„ 120-0-0	
21. Krisna Roy, Vakil of Calcutta (for two months)		15-0-0	

Salaries for the Mahoorees of Toshakhana

Rs. 96-0-0

22. Bhairab Sarkar	Rs. 5 per month	Rs. 60-0-0	
23. Ramdhan Sarkar	„ 3 „ „	„ 36	

Salaries for the Bhandarkhana Dept.

Rs. 111-8-10

24. Banchharam Thakur, cook	„ 2-2-0 „ „	„ 25-8-0	
25. Shyamal Thakur -do- for three months		„ 15-12-0	
26. Khoshan Bhandari	Rs. 2-8-0 „ „	„ 30-0-0	
27. Patiram Moyra (confectioner)			
for 3 months	Rs. 2-0-0 „ „	„ 6-0-0	
28. Rammohan Tahaliya	„ 2-0-0 „ „	„ 24-0-0	
29. Another temporary hand			
for 3 months 13 days	„ 3-0-0 „ „	„ 10-4-10	

Salaries of Gharials (clock winders)

30-34. Ishan Gharial and four

others	Rs. 8-0-0 „ „	Rs. 96-0-0
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Salaries of the Kahars

Rs. 329-8-0

35-41.. Gangaram Kahar & brothers	Rs. 18-4-0 „	Rs. 219-0-0
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42-48. Loknath Kahar and 6

others (at Calcutta)	Rs. 21-0-0 „ „	
	Rs. 19-0-0 „ „	Rs. 110-8-0

Salaries of the Dhobas (washermen)

Rs. 82-8-0

49. Gokul Dhoba	Rs. 5 p.m.	Rs. 60-0-0
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50. Chitta Dhoba (temporary)	Rs. 17-8-0
51. Baisnabdas Dhoba (-do-)	p.m. Rs. 5-0-0

Salaries of the Napits (Barbers)		Rs. 45-0-0
52. Lochan Napit	Rs. 1-12-0 p.m.	Rs. 21-0-0
53. Ramkrishna Napit	„ 1- 4-0 „	„ 15-0-0
54. Narayan Napit (for 9 months)	„ 1- 0-0 „	„ 9-0-0

Salaries of Maid servants		Rs. 24-4-15
55. Pabitra Dassi (8 months 20 days)	Rs. 0-8-0 „	Rs. 4-5-0
56. Gauri Dassi	Rs. 0-8-0 „	„ 7-8-0
57. Kalindi Dassi (14 months)	Rs. 0-8-0 „	„ 7-0-0
58. Ganga Dassi (4 months 3 days)	Rs. 0-8-0 „	„ 2-0-15
59. Khudu Dassi (4 months)	Rs. 0-8-0 „	„ 2-0-0
60. Bashe Dassi (2 months 10 days)	Rs. 0-6-0 „	„ 1-7-0

Salaries of water carrying Goalas		Rs. 204-9-0
61-66. 6 Goalas employed to supply water		Rs. 204-9-0

Salaries of Mashalchis		Rs. 203-9-0
67. Bhikhari Mashalchi (7 months 12 days)	Rs. 3-0-0 p.m.	Rs. 22-3-0
68. Hari Mashalchi	Rs. 3-0-0 „	„ 36-0-0
69. Atmaram Mashalchi	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 36-0-0
70. Padmalochan Mashalchi (9 months and 10 days)	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 28-0-0
71. Shyam (2 months and 14 days)	Rs. 3-0-0 p.m.	Rs. 7-6-0
72. Nabakanta Mashalchi	Rs. 3-0-0 „	„ 36-0-0
73. Damodar (8 months)	Rs. 3-0-0 „	„ 24-0-0
74. Baisnab (4 months 20 days)	Rs. 3-0-0 „	„ 14-0-0

Probably in those days the wealth of the family was expressed in the number of Khidmatgars and Peadas that were employed. This however gave the household the man-power necessary to ward off unlawful elements. Employment of a large menial staff thus provided both prestige and power. Kantababu's household had all these and more

Having made his son 'Maharaja', his house had to have more people than others.

Salaries of the Khidmatgars				Rs. 636-8-0
75.	Dhaniram Obnai Khidmatgar p.m.	Rs. 3-12-0	Rs.	45-0-0
76.	Gangaram „ „	3- 0-0	„	36-0-0
77.	Motiram Khidmatgar			
	(5m. 20d)	„ „ 3- 0-0	„	17-0-0*
78.	Fakir Chhokra „	„ „ 2- 0-0	„	24-0-0
79.	Brindaban Chudkibardar	„ „ 3- 0-0	„	36-0-0
80.	Mohan Chhokra Khidmatgar	„ „ 1- 0-0	„	12-0-0
81.	Bhairab Chhokra „	„ „ 1- 0-0	„	12-0-0
82.	Balai Chudkibardar	„ „ 3- 0-0	„	36-0-0
83.	Padmalochan Khidmatgar	„ „ 2- 0-0	„	20-0-0
	(10 months)			
84.	Iswar Ram Khidmatgar	„ „ 3- 0-0	„	36-0-0
85.	Paban Ghosh „	„ „ 2- 0-0	„	24-0-0
86.	Raghunath Ghosh „	„ „ 2- 0-0	„	24-0-0
87.	Chandoo „	„ „ 3- 0-0	„	36-0-0
88.	Jeo Khidmatgar (3m. 20d.)	„ „ 3- 0-0	„	11-0-0
89.	Manik „ (8m. 10d.)	„ „ 3- 0-0	„	25-0-0
90.	Bholanath Khidmatgar	„ „ 3- 0-0	„	36-0-0
91.	Ananda „	„ „ 2- 0-0	„	24-0-0
92.	Bharat „	„ „ 2- 0-0	„	24-0-0
93.	Sadananda „	„ „ 2- 0-0	„	24-0-0
94.	Gadadhar „ (1 m. 15d.)	„ „ 2- 0-0	„	3-0-0
95.	Ram Khidmatgar	„ „ 2- 0-0	Rs.	24-0-0
96.	Baidyanath „	„ „ 2- 0-0	„	24-0-0
97.	Mohan (Senior) „ (9 months)	„ „ 2- 0-0	„	18-0-0
98.	Brindaban Napit „	„ „ 3- 0-0	„	36-0-0
99.	Lochan Khidmatgar (8 m.)	„ „ 2- 0-0	„	16-0-0
100.	Baburam „ (3m. 8d.)	„ „ 2- 0-0	„	6-8-0
101.	Ramprosad Ghosh „ (8m.)	„ „ 2- 0-0	„	16-0-0
102.	Thakur Das Agoori „ (3 months)	„ 2- 0-0	„	6-0-0
103.	Baidyanath Napit „ (1 month)	„ 2- 0-0	„	2-0-0

Of the 29 Khidmatgars six stayed for less than six months and five stayed less than a year. The other 20 were permanent.

* Not totalled.

Salaries of Peadas (Security staff)			Rs. 879-5-5
104. Mohan Singh, Havildar	Rs. 27-8-0 p.m.	Rs. 330-0-0	
105. Badi Roy, Jamadar (7m. 20d.)	„ 3-8-0 „	„ 26-5-5	
106. Yarulla, Jamadar (3m. 18d.)	„ 3-8-0 „	„ 12-8-0	
107. Gourmohan Harkara	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 36-0-0	
108. Dataram -do-	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 36-0-0	
109. Roshan Peada (7m. 20d.)	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 23-0-0	
110. Jagmohan Mistri (3m. 10d.)	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 10-0-0	
111. Prichha Roy Peada	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 36-0-0	
112. Bhabani Singh Peada	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 36-0-0	
113. Siraj Sotabardar	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 36-0-0	
114. Nizam Peada	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 36-0-0	
115. Meer Arjani Peada	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 36-0-0	
116. Chand Khan Peada	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 36-0-0	
117. Chhatrapati Upadhaya Peada	„ 4-0-0 „	„ 48-0-0	
118. Paban Tewari Peada (8 m.)	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 24-0-0	
119. Abdulla Chobdar	„ 5-0-0 „	„ 60-0-0	
120. Palta Singh Peada (8 m.)	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 24-0-0	
121. Gopee Roy Peada (11 m.)	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 33-0-0	
Salaries of Dehriwan (Gatemen)			Rs. 73-1-10
122. Rajnath Misra Dehriwan (6m.26d.)	3-8-0 „	Rs. 24-0-0	
123. Kajal Singh -do-	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 36-0-0	
124. Kakta Roy -do-(4m. 11d.)	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 13-1-10	
Salaries of the Hazaras (Sweepers)			Rs. 172-4-10
125. Manik Hazara	Rs. 3-0-0 „	Rs. 36-0-0	
126. Nishan -do-	Rs. 3-0-0 „	„ 36-0-0	
127. Mansaraem -do-	Rs. 2-8-0 „	„ 30-0-0	
128. Atmaram -do- (4m. 2d.)	„ 2-8-0 „	„ 10-2-10	
129. Tekroo -do- (5 months)	„ 2-8-0 „	„ 12-8-0	
130. Mohan -do- (7 months)	„ 2-8-0 „	„ 17-8-0	
131. Ramprosad -do- (11m. 15d.)	Rs. 1-12-0 „	„ 20-2-0	
132. Boodhoo -do- (5 months)	„ 2-0-0 „	„ 10-0-0	
Salaries of the servants of the Chiriakhana (Bird-house)			Rs. 72-0-0
133. Ramaji, servant of the pigeons	Rs. 3-0-0 „	Rs. 36-0-0	
134. Kalicharan Koori, manias (8m.)	Rs. 3-0-0 „	„ 24-0-0	
135. Kiritchandra Roy -do- (4m.)	„ 3-0-0 „	„ 12-0-0	
Salaries of the Haarris (cleaning)			Rs. 60-0-0
Total Rs. 5105-0-0			
Salaries of the Malis (Gardeners)			„ 557-8-10

All the above employees had their food or were given provisions but in case of the boatmen now a new system was adopted. They were given a sum of money as their salary and another sum of money for provisions and also for employing oarsmen. Thus Gossaindas Manjhi received Rs. 36 as his annual salary but was paid a total sum of Rs. 283-9-5 for expenses. Banchharam Manjhi was employed for only two months, Aswin and Kartick. He was not paid anything as salary but received a total amount of Rs. 75-8-0 as expenses.

136.	Gossaindas Manjhi salary	Rs. 36	total expenses	Rs. 283-9-5
137.	Bibaran Danri (for 4m.3d.)	„ 3	„ „	„ 14-4-10
138.	Bandhab Danri (for 2 months)	6	„ „	„ 15-0-0
139.	Chokraram Danri (for 4m. 10d.)	13	„ „	„ 13-0-0
140.	Kangalinarayan Peshbaj (for 1m.31d.)	„	„	„ 15-11-0
141.	Ramkanto Ghat Manjhi (1m.)	„	„	„ 26-4-15
142.	Bancharam Manjhi (1m. 31d.)	„	„	„ 75-8-0

Expenses for plying boats	Rs. 443-5-10
Salaries of the servants of the cow-house	„ 136-12-0
Salaries of the servants of the stable	„ 387-2-10
Annual expenses for supplying hay (Ghashiara)	„ 239-9-5

The total expenses on salaries account comes to— Rs. 6869-5-15

Add to this the salaries paid for the worship of the Dicty:—

143.	Shyam Thakur Pujari	@Rs. 3-8-0	Rs. 42-0-0
144.	Paramananda Thakur	@Rs. 3-0-0	„ 36-0-0
	Tulshiwala		
145.	Banchharam Ghosh	@Rs. 3-0-0	„ 36-0-0
	Tahaliya		
			Rs. 114-0-0
			Rs. 6983-5-15

It can therefore be said with some certainty that the salaries paid was about Rs. 7000 annually or Rs. 600 per month in the personal account and more than 150 people were employed. (It has not been possible to know the number of Malis and Ghasiaras employed in the Gardens and the stables). The cow-house accounts however show that under one headman 3 servants and 4 *rakhals* (boys to take the cows to graze and look after them there), a total of eight persons were employed who were paid Rs. 136-12-0 per annum. In the stables the coachman

presided over nine Sais totalling to ten who were paid Rs. 387-2-10 per annum.

The ledger is a store-house of many informations. For instance a *Shenai* man named Kabir was employed for the months of Bhadra, Aswin and Aghran at the rate of Rs. 3 per month. One Draupadi Maydawali supplied the families' requirements of fine flour. Probably she grinded the flour, supplied to her by the household. She received Rs. 100 for her endeavours. Indramoni Machhonee supplied the fish for the Sradh ceremony at the cost of Rs. 60-3-0. Incidentally this is the first reference to fish. Though the family remained strictly vegetarian they had become catholic enough to serve fish to the guests after Sradh ceremony.

The expense of the sradh ceremonies is interesting in itself. Joyram, the second or Madhyam brother died in the eleventh month of the preceding year. Payments to the Brahman-pundits on the occasion of his sradh ceremony were made in the month of Sraban. Kantababu most probably died on 29th Pous 1200, as the main Sradh was performed on the 29th Magh. The sradh was silver-'*Shorosh*'. (Every thing was made in silver except a few religious utensils in copper). A boat, an elephant and land was gifted. Curds were sent to the Zemindari *tarafs* nearby. 100 pots were sent to *taraf* Bhadur, 18 pots were sent to Gajnipur, 18 to Gopalpur, 33 to Bhabanandapur, 48 to Dhamipur, 41 to Katlamari and 32 pots of curd were sent to Dihi Mehrpur. 92 pots were sent to the working men and 55 to the tenants.

Four '*Dan-sagars*'* were performed which can be considered to be utterly modest under the circumstances. Kantababu's descendants generally stuck to 16 '*Dan-Sagars*'. The two daughters Jamunamani and Gangamani performed the '*Teratri*' (Sradh ceremony after three nights) sradh ceremony, denoting that both of them were already married (A married daughter is only entitled to performing the '*Teratri*', an unmarried daughter would have the same mourning period as the brothers, i.e. one month in this instance).

There is a reference to '*Bara-sarkar*'. This is a most unusual term typically Mughal, and is now completely out of usage. Here it denoted

* 16 '*Shoros*' makes one '*Dan-Sagar*'

Kantababu's widow who made special gifts to the Guru, Nrisinghananda Thakur 'inside the house' on the occasion. He was gifted the goods of two 'Shorosh', one by the son and the other by the widow. The total expense of the Sradh ceremony came to Rs. 16,205-13-17½ ganda.²⁷

Worried by the extravagant expenditure that Kantababu witnessed in his life time, he made a Will quite early in life in which he laid down that no Sradh ceremony in his family should exceed the stipulated sum of money. His intention was to see that the hard earned money of the family was not squandered away by a lazy descendant in flashy functions. The registered Religious Trust that he created on 1 May, 1793, echoed his Will, having terms strictly laid down.

As related earlier a gift of Jaigir in the Ghazipur district which belonged to Raja Mahipnarayan of Benaras, was made over by Hastings to Kantababu in 1782, but it was not made public till 10 January, 1785, or a few weeks before he departed from Bengal. The *Sanad* bearing the above date was granted in the name of the Emperor. A translation made on 17 February 1847 reads thus:—'The Victorious Emperor Shah Allum by the hand of the Devoted Farzand Sadat Maud Amirool Yetmat-ud-dowla Warren Hastings Bahadur Jaladat Jung Governor General' granted the Jaigir of 41 villages to defray the expenses and worship of the Thakur (Deity) amounting to Rs. 10,000 per annum. This property was transferred by Kantababu to the absolute Religious Trust that he created on the 1 May 1793 (12 Baisakh 1200 B.S.).

The stipulations of the expenses were strictly laid down. How much should be spent for worship and *Sadabrata* (feeding guests and co-religionists) were delineated. He provided for the worship of the Thakur Laxminarayan in Cossimbazar but also allotted portions for the 'Seva and Puja' in Brindaban. As a true Baisnab he wished to worship 'Jagannath' at Puri and also Sri Mahaprabhu (Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu). Never losing his practical materialism, he witnessed the Deed by his son and one member from each of the family of his brothers. Thus besides the seal and signature of the donor, the signatures of the witnesses follow led by Sri Nrisingha Nandy and then Sri Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur, Sri Gokulchandra Nandy and Sri Gurucharan

²⁷The Ledger of 1200 (1793-94).

Nandi. Kantababu wrote his name in Bengali Script but in Sanskrit language, besides his seal, 'Krisnakanta Nandinah' meaning 'this seal belongs to Krisnakanta Nandy.' The wisdom of getting each of the family of the brothers to witness the deed cannot be over emphasised. This far-sighted action did not create any claim on the property concerned, which enabled the worship of the Deity to be continued smoothly for 161 years (On 1st July 1952 the U.P. Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act 1951 came into force. The State claimed that not only Zemindari rights but also Jaigir rights have vested in the State of U.P. A suit is pending at the Supreme Court since 1970).²⁸

The Religious Trust Deed of the U. P. property was but the second endowment made for the worship of the Deity. The first endowment was incorporated in the Will of Kantababu which he made soon after he had installed the Deity 'Sri Sri Laxminarayan Dev Thakur' in his house. The date of the Will is 16 Magh 1188 or 5 February 1782 written in Bengali, having only four items of directions, in only one and a half pages. The Will is simple and direct in style, not having any legal language, jargons or complexities. There is reason to believe that it might be Kantababu's own construction. If so, then Kantababu's knowledge in Sanskrit is established. There is however one English word 'list' in the Will.

Translation of the Will :

'I, Krisna Kanta Nandy am the preparer of the Will given below:

By the supreme grace of the Almighty, I have been able to collect, by my own endeavours, a large amount of various types of properties.

'Now I entirely wish that the house I have built for religious worship and sacred functions be always prepared to serve food to the poor and the destitute, as well as to the visitors and the guests. For the above religious practice allot Rs. 6000 (six thousand) per annum. I also allot the sum of Rs. 3000 (three thousand) per annum for the Sacred Samajbati that has been established by me. All the yearly functions and ceremonies being thirteen in number are to be celebrated, including the Jatra and the Mahotsab*. For this purpose I allot a sum of Rs. 1000 (one thousand) annually.

²⁸The Religious Trust Deed of Kantababu dated 1st May 1793 (12 Baisakh 1200).

* Rathjatra and Doljatra in May and March.

‘For the worship of the Deity and the other religious and charitable duties described above annually Rs. 19000 (Nineteen Thousand) must be spent. The expenditure will be made from the income of the Zemindari acquired by me and known as Pargana Kantanagar. All the expenses of the pious, charitable and religious actions described by me will be made from the Zemindari of mine referred to above.

‘My son and grandson whosoever will represent me in whatever time will continue to perform during their life time, the pious and charitable deeds and will particularly look after the worship of the Deity as the executor of my Will. The main responsibility of my said representative will be to continue to perform the religious, charitable and pious deeds in the best way, in whatever manner it is considered necessary at the time.

‘Under no circumstances the charitable and religious duties that I have started by my own free will, can be changed or deviated from. Rs. 19000 (Nineteen Thousand) will have to be spent each year from the Pargana, I have referred to above.

‘My representatives shall never sell or make a gift of the Pargana. They will have no right to change its present character, shape or size though they will remain the owners of the property and be the executors of my Will and shall from the income there continue to perform the religious and charitable deeds described above.

‘If anybody sells the above Zemindari or makes a gift of it or in any way tries to change its character, shape or size; that action shall be considered totally invalid. Item finished.

‘Item Second. I have only one son, therefore I am giving the responsibility of carrying on my Will to him. If he begets a son, well and good, otherwise he shall adopt a son and continue my name and family, so that the ‘*Sradh*’ and ‘*tarpan*’ of the forefathers are regularly performed. And all those who will come in my family from time to time will continue these performances either by begetting or adopting a son as the case may be. Under no circumstances the name of the family or paying homage to the forefathers by the offering of ‘*pinda*’* should be allowed to become extinct and lost.

* Annual offerings of rice, banana, curd, sugar and water.

'Those of the family of my brothers who will remain alive (the male members only) should be given sufficient for food and clothings from the earnings of my properties. Similarly all the generations that will come after me should look after the relations of my blood and caste. Item finished.

'Item Third. I will leave a signed 'list' or statement of expenses. On my death that should be strictly followed and the annual expenses of the family never increased or decreased beyond the sum of Rs. 57000 per year. All the expenses shall be met from the income or interest of my Zemin-dari. Item finished.

'Item Fourth. On my death only Rs. 40,000 shall be spent for my 'Adya Sradh'** ceremony, no more and not less.

'As I have performed the Sradh ceremony of my mother at an expenditure of Rs. 40,000 only, so the same amount of money shall be spent in my Sradh ceremony also. In this way whosoever will become the head of my family at whatever time, his sradh ceremony will be performed with an expenditure of Rs. 40,000. No one will have the right or authority to increase this amount fixed by me. Item finished.

The Will is ended. 1188 San, date 16th Magh. Krisnakanta Nandy.'²⁹

The Will shows a very conscious mind that was anxious to see that even after his death the religious worship was regularly carried on. Kantababu also tried to keep the family bond close, by providing for food and clothings for his brothers' families. He particularly wanted to check all extravagance in the family and limited the annual spending to a fixed sum. The foolish exuberance of the newly rich which was exhibited during sradh ceremonies did not find any favour with Kantababu, who allotted a fixed sum which he considered to be more than sufficient for the sradh ceremonies of the heads of the family. Kantababu also desired to prevent the stinginess of the family particularly in religious worship and annual spending, but in regard to the Sradh ceremony he only fixed the maximum permissible expenditure.

If the books of account are carefully reviewed it will be easy to find the astute mind that was behind these accounts. The mind of Kantababu

** First sradh ceremony.

²⁹The Will of Kantababu dated 5th February 1782 (16th Magh 1188).

quite clearly dictated a way of living which was normal to a modest Bengali. He demanded strict religious worship of the Deity and the pursuance of the Baisnab ideals. In temporal matters he advocated modesty without stinginess or extravagance. He was undoubtedly laying down the 'golden mean' for his descendants.

The Baisnabism of Kantababu did not stray further than the trodden path. But he wanted to follow and made his descendants follow every aspect of the modest rituals with the strictest discipline. To Kantababu, Baisnabism was not only a religion but also the philosophy of living. His way of life was therefore intertwined with the way of Baisnabism. His accounts, his Trust Deed and his Will therefore are never dissociated from his religion.

Explaining the way of devotion, the Lord said to Arjuna in the Bhagabad-Gita, 'Dear to me is the man who is self sufficient, chaste, indifferent, determined and decisive. Dear to me is the man who is neither self-pitying nor passionate, who forsakes deeds, renounces purity and impurity and is devoted. Dear to me is the man, alike to friend and foe, alike in fame and infamy, in heat and cold, in joy and sorrow, unattached, equal minded in blame or praise, silent, satisfied, undisturbed, single minded in devotion. Dear to me are those who walk along this deathless dharma, faithful and devoted considering me as the supreme goal.'³⁰ The teachings of the book is a summary of the life of Kantababu.

³⁰The Bhagabad Gita (Canto 12—The way of Devotion p. 77-78) Tr. Prof. P. Lal.

CHAPTER VII

MAHARAJA LOKENATH BAHADUR

The history of Kantababu does not end with his death but runs for a further period of ten years. The life of his son, who was grand eloquently called Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur even during the life-time of his father, was in reality an epilogue to the life of Kantababu. Lokenath can be considered to be the alter-ego to his father as most of the properties were acquired in his name. The salt business was started in the name of Lokenath in 1768 when he was only $3\frac{1}{2}$ years old; he became a businessman in silk goods and raw silk when he was barely eight and the wholeseller of salt at the same age. As a Revenue Farmer he was the youngest being only 5 years of age. When he petitioned to have the Baharbund Pargana as his perpetual hereditary, he was not older than eleven years. Almost from a year after his birth, properties were acquired in his name, till a few months before his death.

Physically Lokenath was tall and frail in body which gave him a stooping gesture which made him look rather older than his years. His complexion was dark though perhaps fairer than his father (who was compared with the cuckoo-bird). His complexion has been described as dark wheat coloured. Never very strong or healthy, he became ill after the death of his father and practically never recovered. He depended much on his very efficient and loving cousin who was twenty years older to him, for acquisition and management of properties. The cousin took over the title of Kantababu and called himself Dewan Baisnabcharan Baboo. As ill health still persisted the childless Lokenath, he decided to follow the instructions of his father's Will, wherein it was stated that the line of succession should be maintained, if necessary by adoption. Kantababu had almost made the selection himself but hesitated to force Lokenath into adopting a son. Lokenath now bowed to the decision made by his father. Around 1796, he selected for adoption the only son of Baisnabcharan who came to be immediately known as Raja Golaknath. A property, Hooda Gopjan, was bought in his name in an auction sale on 19 September 1797. By adopting Baisnabcharan's son, Lokenath brought the two wings of the family together. An element of divine justice perhaps was also there, as Lokenath's birth had prevented Kantababu

from adopting Baisnabcharan. Gurucharan however, having failed in canvassing the case of his eldest son, Gobindacharan was unhappy.

For a time every thing went smoothly even Maharaja Lokenath felt better, increasing the income of the property by quick purchases at Revenue sales. Then tragedy struck. Young Golaknath was the first to die during the latter part of 1797 or in early 1798. He was followed by his father Baisnabcharan who died in August 1798. This untimely death of the main pillar of the Estate, caused great difficulty to Lokenath. Wave after wave of misery engulfed the family. Narsing the oldest living member, passed away in 1799 and was closely followed by Anangamanjari, Kantababu's second wife and the most respected member of the family. Also died the frivolous but loyal Gurucharan with his eldest son Gobindacharan. Lokenath himself again became extremely ill and wrote his last Will and testament in 1802. The only light in this grim darkness of sorrow was that his wife Susharmoyee was pregnant and at the time of writing the Will, Lokenath ardently hoped that she would be carrying the baby full time. With the greatest of confidence Lokenath wrote that if he had a son then he would inherit everything but if it was a daughter his wife will adopt a son and carry forward the name of the family.

Harinath the only child of Maharaja Lokenath was born on 5 September, 1802. Lokenath wrote in his Will that the instruction left by his father, the renowned Kantababu, had been followed by him and it was his wish that they will be followed by his son. Lokenath, it is clear, was certain of his death at an early age. He died on 12 May, 1804, at the age of 40 years. It is not known yet what was the affliction that killed Lokenath at the age of 40 and his son Harinath at the age of 30. A genetic ailment of a family who were very much vegetarian in their food habits cannot be ruled out. The death of most of the family in 1798-99 could be the result of food poisoning or epidemic. Otherwise it is difficult to explain the death of so many members of the family so varied in their life and outlook, within such a short space of time.

This chapter will be limited to only two sections. One would deal with the acquisition of properties after Kantababu's death from 1794 to 1804, while the other would deal with the social position and religious attitude of Lokenath. With Lokenath's death a period in the development of the family ended. The minor son of Lokenath was protected by the

Court of Wards. Thus in 1804 the Zemindary came to be managed by the Court of Wards for the first time. (The Estate in the next 150 years went to the Court of Wards' management four times).

It will not be wrong to mention here that the Zemindary policy of Lokenath after his father's death was greatly influenced by his able cousin Baisnabcharan, who though an enthusiastic administrator, reflected the adventurism of his father Nrisingha and not the wise caution of his uncle, Kantababu. It was left to Lokenath, though ill he was during the period, to consolidate the gains of Baisnabcharan's progressive policy. Nevertheless during Lokenath's time the Zemindari of different districts were acquired and the geographical boundary of the Estate enhanced. Lokenath's mastery of the Permanent Settlement laws enabled him within a short time to take the maximum advantage of the system. While examining the records of Baharbund, Firminger credited Lokenath with the policy of fixing the rental in relation to the crop and organising the collection periodically. This ultimately prevented the larger landlords from oppressing the farmers.

A) Properties, 1794-1804.

i) Murshidabad

Lokenath started acquiring properties after his father's death from June 1794. He bought 2½ Kathas of land for Rs. 15 in the Gobindabati Taluk in Taraf Kasimnagar within Pargana Chunakhali from Golaknath Sen on 25 Jaistha 1201 and the Zemindari rights for Rs. 2 on 25 Agrahayana 1201. On 19 November 1794 Lokenath purchased a piece of land in Saidabad which had historical background. The land belonged to Aga Gregory, the Armenian cloth merchant, who rose to be the Commander-in-Chief of the armies of Nawab Mirkasim and came to be known as Gurgin Khan. He was later murdered at the instigation of the suspicious Nawab. This piece of land then devolved on Khoja Stephen Petruse, his brother, who is quite well known in history because of his many colourful deeds. Khoja Petruse had taken a loan from Joseph Johannes Admor of Calcutta by pledging this land. As the loan remained unpaid, at the instance of the creditor, the Sheriff of Calcutta, William Smoulet put the land to sale. On 19 November Maharaja Lokenath as the highest bidder bought the property for only Rs. 325. The last deal of the year 1201 was on 17 Falgoun when Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur

exchanged with Radharaman Sarma, 3½ Bighas of Bramhattor land in Taraf Katlamari, Pargana Kantanagar. Radharaman Sarma had excavated a tank in the land of the Raja.

The purchase of properties around the ancestral house and land continued in 1202 (1795-96). Chunakhali Pargana fares in almost all the acquisitions. On 19 Ashar the pucca double storeyed Golabari of Kashinath Sarma was bought for Rs. 592. This was possibly the repurchase of the dwelling house bought by Kantababu on 27 Aswin 1172 (1761). On 29 Ashar it was 3½ Kattas of land, a patta for which was granted by Durga Charan Basu for an annual rent of Rs. 1-8-0.¹

The same policy was pursued in 1203 (1796-97) also. Gouri Sankar Bagchi granted a patta for 2 Bighas of Payosthi (new alluvial) land of the river Ganges in Mouza Sannyashidanga for an annual rent of Re. 1 on 5 Baisakh (April 1796). On 6 Jaistha corresponding to 16 May 1796 Maharaja Lokenath buys in Supreme Court sale organised in Calcutta, Zemindary right of 9 Mouzas in Murshidabad including Duligram and Deshalpur. The District Magistrate puts him in possession of the properties by an order of even date. He is asked to deposit the arrear revenues of the past owner, as well as the revenue for the ensuing year. Curiously no sum of money is mentioned in the documents. The document of 28 June 1796 (Ashar 1203) is even more curious. The East India Company granted to Maharaja Lokenath the settlement of Mouza Bauchteenah appertaining to Pargana Shamaskhally and the Jalkar (literal : water revenue, meaning tank settlement) Burnee and Mouza Bhabanandapur. The Maharaja paid a *nazr* of Rs. 500. What is interesting here is the attached document dated 15 August 1774 where Lokenath had been authorised to make regular collections in these areas. Except for a reference to the village Banjetty and the Jheel (Big Tank) Burnee which Kantababu wanted to have as a talook, in a letter that Hastings wrote to Middleton in 1770, there are no reference to the acquisition of either. Banjetty had already become a part of Kantababu's property, now the acquisition of Jheel Burnee was regularised.

The three other acquisitions were of the usual pattern in Chunakhali Pargana. On 9 Kartick Uddhab Das sold his pucca house for Rs. 90; on 25 Kartick Udayanarain Ghosh sold his 5 Bighas 5 Kattas land in

¹Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties, (1201), Sl.s. 120, 112, 301 & 6; (1202), Sl.s. 325 and 305.

Jhoukhola for Rs. 100, and on 15 Magh, Radha Mohan Ghosh, the Gomastah of Saiad Mohammed Hossein Khan granted a patta for an orchard in Basantpur known as Talgachi for an annual rent of Rs. 6 only. With this Lokenath's acquisitions for the year amounted to six properties in the district.²

The first property of 1204 (1797-98) is extremely important as it was purchased in the name of the adopted son of the Maharaja who was called 'Raja Golaknath'. On 19 September 1797 (6 Aswin) Hooda Gopejan was bought in auction sale for Rs. 18,700. The Magistrate issued an *Istahar* or Order stating that Golaknath was the rightful owner from the date and was fully authorised to collect as he has already deposited the arrear as well as the current revenue of the property. The order about another auction purchase was communicated rather late. It said that two years ago on 7 January 1795 or 26 Pous 1202, Lokenath had purchased all the rights of Bhatpara Taluk consisting of 650 Bighas of land for Rs. 708. The rights to all the forests, waterways and fruits (Bankar, Jalkar, Phalkar) were also included. The other properties, except one, were in Chunakhali Pargana as usual. On 18 Magh, 3 Bighas and 2 Kattas of the Bramhattor land of Gourisankar Chakrabarti was sold by Gopeenath and Radhanath Sinha for Rs. 25 only. On 27 Magh, Guruprasad Sarma sold 8 Kattas of his Bramhattor land for Rs. 30. On 2 Chaitra the same Guruprasad Sarma sold his Golabari land for Rs. 30. On 19 Chaitra, Kurani Bewa, wife of Harekrisna Mali, sells her land consisting of bamboo bushes and trees for Rs. 6. The property lay on the south-side of the Maharaja's tank.³

On the death of Baisnabcharan, Nrisinghababu felt absolutely dejected. He sold his famous orchard known as the Wroughton-Baug to Lokenath for a token value of Rs. 10. This document helps to date the death of Dewan Baisnabcharan in 1798.⁴

Lokenath was lonely in 1205 (1798-99) yet he went on consolidating his position. Ujjalmani Devya wife of Ramtanu Bhattacharjee sold her 2 Kattas of Bramhattor land for Rs. 14 in Chunakhali on 14 Baisakh. On 2 July, 1798 or 21 Ashar, 1205, the Collector's declaration (*Istahar*)

²Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties (1203), Sl. 275, 304, 299, 194, 104 and 271.

³*Ibid.*, (1204), Sl. 325, 305, 129, 122, 127 and 97.

⁴Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties (1204), Sl. 67.

notified that henceforth Maharaja Lokenath was the owner of Mouza Lalitakunja which he had bought in the auction sale for Rs. 900, therefore all rents should be paid to him from the date of declaration. On 30 Aswin Gourikanta Sarma sold 4 Bighas of Bramhattor land in Chunakhali for Rs. 24 only. On 14 Magh, Foka Bewa Fakirni sold 1 Bigha 6 Kattas of land for Rs. 30. The next day, 15 Magh, Krisnaram Das of Sripur Mouza sold his paternal pucca house with the land appertaining to it for Rs. 90, both the properties being in Pargana Chunakhali. On 2 Falgoon, Sibprosad Chattopadhaya of Pargana Fatesing sold 24 Bighas of his Bramhattor land for Rs. 201.⁵

From 1206 (1799-1800) the Collector's *Istahars* became more informative. On 10 June, 1799 or 30 Jaistha, 1206, the Collector's declaration stated that Maharaja Lokenath had purchased the Bipraghata Taluk in Revenue Sale for Rs. 2 only. On 24 July, 1799 or 11 Sraban, 1206, the Collector's declaration informed that Maharaja Lokenath had purchased at Revenue Sale Hooda Raghunathpur, and Khayramari and Garamari Talooks for Rs. 22,675. The two auctions demonstrate the expertise of Lokenath in acquiring properties. The rest of the properties follow the usual pattern of being in Pargana Chunakhali. On 16 Sraban, Chandmani Bewa wife of Gobindananda Das sells her house in Sahapur for Rs. 147. Two years later Manik Sarnakar's wife, Nilmani Bewa sold the land on which the house was situated for Rs. 3-8-0, on 17 Jaistha 1208. On 13 Agrahayana, Muhammad Sukur Nasya sells 1 Bigha 14 K. etc. land for Rs. 14-2-10 in Mouza Kasimnagar. On 5 Pous, Khari Bewa and Jiboo Bewa sold their jote of over 3 Bighas for Rs. 61-14-8 in Taraf Kasimnagar. The last purchase of the year was in Pargana Rajpur, Mirza Zafar sold his land and orchard consisting of 9 Bighas 5 Kattas and 15 gonda for Rs. 150.⁶

The three properties purchased in 1207 (1800-1801) were not only well spread out over the year but were quite insignificant also. Ramnarayan Das the Gomastha of Lala Keshab Singh settled Taraf Kanaipara etc. in Asadnagar Pargana for an annual rent of Rs. 4-13-0 on 1 Baisakh. On 23, Falgoon, Swarup Chand Dutta sold his pucca shop room in Hat Sreepur in Chunakhali Pargana for Rs. 8-4-0. The last acquisition was made on 16 Chaitra, when Durgacharan Bandopadhaya

⁵Ibid., (1205), Slis. 126, 298/300, 203, 128, 187 and 188.

⁶Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties (1206), Slis. 309, 310, 226, 147, 94 and 148.

and Gurucharan Bandopadhaya sold 1 Bigha 15 Kattas of land in their Taluk in Taranagar for a sum of Rs. 61 only.⁷

The letters of the Secretary, Board of Revenue also reveal the various different ways in which Lokenath used to collect properties.

G. Dowdeswell, Secretary, Board of Revenue wrote to C. Oldfield, Collector of Murshidabad on 26 February 1796. 'I am directed by the Board of Revenue to transmit to you that they desire you will put Moha Raja Looknaut Bahauder in possession of such of the lands which have been purchased by him as are situated in your District on receiving payment from the Sheriff of any arrears of Revenue which may be due from the proprietor, provided also that you are not aware of any objections to the sale, in which case you will previously report the circumstances of the case for the Board's consideration.' Similarly on 27 September 1799, C. Buller, Sub-Secretary to the Board of Revenue wrote to T. Hays, Collector of Murshidabad, 'I am directed by the Board of Revenue to transmit to you two petitions from Moharajah Lokenaut and Kishennaut Roy and to acquaint you that they desire you will comply with the application contained in them, on the parties producing the necessary deeds of conveyance and otherwise confirming to the rules generally observed in making 'Entries of Transfers' in the Register of mutations.' The petition is enclosed. 'The petition of Moharajah Lokenaut Behauder is as follows :—

'On the 14th of Bhaudan last, my Vakeel Kishennaut Roy purchased at Sale of the Board of Revenue, Dhees Berjepore and Baugsunder in Pergunnah Amrole in Nattore. The purchase was made for me and the amount of purchase money being Rs. 6,600. As he had not at the time received the necessary powers from me, he purchased the lands in his own name, since that he had sold them to me and given me the deed of sale and presented a petition for transfer of the lands to my name. The Byenamah of the Board he has likewise given over to me, I pray that the Collector may be directed to make necessary transfer accordingly.' An almost similar petition is made by Kishennaut Roy, 'Vakeel of Moharaja Lokenaut Bahadur' stating that the property belonged to his employer⁸.

⁷Ibid., (1207), Sls. 273, 227 and 279.

⁸I.O.R. West Bengal District Records, (New Series) 1789-1803., Letters Received, 239, 252-253, 507, 514 and 597.

Certain transactions were reported which were also related to land holding. Dowdeswell wrote to Hays on 10 June, 1880, 'I have this day granted a Bill (by Order of the Board of Revenue) upon your Treasury in favour of Lokenaut Bahadur or Order for Sicca Rs. 1025 payable at Ten Days after sight in Gold.' Another note from Dowdeswell to Hays on 4 July 1800, 'I have this day granted a Bill upon your Treasury in favour of Moha Raja Locknaut or Order for Sicca Rupees 1071 payable at Ten Days after sight in Gold. Fort William.' The last note came from G. Smith, Collector Dinajpore to William Brodie, the acting Collector of Murshidabad on 6 February 1802, 'Enclosed I transmit a letter upon the service of which I request the favour of your causing to be delivered in your presence to Raja Locknaut to whom it is addressed. The Raja I understand resides in Causimbazar'.⁹

In 1208 (1801-02) the properties acquired continued to be as insignificant as of the last year. The first acquisition of 17 Jaistha has been already referred to in connection with another acquisition of 1206. The second purchase was made on 9 Ashar when Govind Bewa wife of Gurucharan Swarnakar sold her brick built house for Rs. 53. The speciality of the deed is that it is accompanied with an English translation, the first of its kind encountered during this research. This of course does not readily become a regular feature in the transfer of properties, but is a clear indication that in another few years Persian was going to be replaced by English. On 10 Falgoon, Bhagwan Das of Basantpur Mouza in Taraf Talgachhi sold his little hut in Maheswaripatti for Rs. 51-3-0 only. On 9 Chaitra, Suparna Hatpaj sold over one Bigha of land in Hat Sreepur, Mouza Matianpara for Rs. 43. The last purchase of the year was of some interest. On 16 Chaitra, Laxmi Bewa wife of Balgobind Das sold her house in the town Cossimbazar for Rs. 1501, in full and final settlement of the dues that she incurred in the course of her business. Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur was the purchaser, but the dues were not to him, but to others. The lady has signed her name in Devnagri script, proving that business women of the eighteenth century were not at all illiterate as they are sometimes fashioned to be.¹⁰

Probably because of the illness of Lokenath only a single property was acquired in 1209 (1802-03). This was a Lakheraj land (tax-free) in

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad properties (1208), Sls. 240, 79, 166 and 173.

Mouza Bhudor measuring 17 Bighas and 14 Kattas. The purchase price of Rs. 220-13-0 paid to Rahaman Khan included all rights particularly of orchard and trees. The speciality of this document is that the Registrar signs the documents in English, 'Registered this 29th December 1802, and signed and acknowledged before me at 2 O'clock P.M., in Book A of 1802, (signed) Wm. Redding, Register.' Except the Persian seals the document is only in Bengali and not in Persian, containing the Bengali date of 16 Pous 1209. The second speciality of the document is its language. Gone were the days when a Bengali document had more than half Persian words and phrases. In this deed a clear and straightforward Bengali language has been used, though not yet absolutely free from the influence of the old Persian pattern. It is found from this document that names of the trees used are also known Bengali names and not Persian names as had been used sometimes, earlier. For instance the 250 mango trees, 38 coconut trees, 9 palm trees, 3 Gab trees (a sort of a mangosteen), 4 Jam trees (a sort of black berry or the rose apple), 8 Mahua trees and 141 Bamboo bushes were included in this deed of sale.¹¹

The last year in the life of Maharaja Loknath saw the acquisition of only two properties and both in Chunakhali Pargana. On 29 Jaistha Gobindananda Das sold an orchard of over 4 Bighas and a pucca house on 3 Kattas of land in the town of Cossimbazar for Rs. 453. On 20 Bhadra Bootnec Bewa the wife of Bakir Choonee sold her manjil, consisting of one pucca room situated in Hat Sreepur for Rs. 23 only.¹²

ii) Nadia

The very first property of the District acquired after the death of Kantababu is the witness to the saddest story of the family. Baisnabcharan Nandy bought the two parts of the prosperous Dihi Hazipur, Nabatbati and others at the Revenue Sale of 18 August 1797 or 5 Bhadra 1204 and 1 September 1797 or 19 Bhadra 1204 for a total amount of Rs. 9371-12-7. Unfortunately he did not live to enjoy the property and died in August, 1798. Nrisinghababu, his father unable to bear the burden of the loss of his only living son and grandson, died in 1799. Chaitanyacharan Debkanya, the widow of Baisnabcharan makes a pathetic preamble, informing the sorry state of her family before selling this property to,

¹¹Cossimbazar Raj Records. Murshidabad Properties (1209), Slis. 139.

¹²Ibid., (1210), Slis. 174 and 315.

Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur on 11 Aswin 1206 or October 1799. She states that as a destitute woman she has no necessity of any property. She however continued to stay with Lokenath after having sold the Nadia property for Rs. 12142-6-14.¹³

On 20 August 1798 the Collector of Nadia informed the Board that 'Bussun Churn Nundy, Talookdar of Dhee Hajeepore died a short time ago, leaving a wife but no children and the father of the deceased is in life and petitions for permission to take possession of the estate and pay the Revenue assessed upon it.'¹⁴ Soon however the Board had to transfer the Talook to the name of Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur.

It is not quite clear whether the presence of Sir A. Seton, Bart, the long time family friend, helped in the aquisition of the Nadia properties. the largest of which was purchased from the Maharaja of Nadia himself. The property consisting of the larger parts of Pargana Plassey, Dihi Mangalpara,** Sarbangapur and other principalities, was purchased in Revenue Sale on 19 Bhadra 1204, or 1 September 1797, on payment of Rs. 1,37,000. The arrear revenue amounting only to Rs. 1321-11-13 was also paid. The Nadia Collector issued a *Baynama* as well as an *Istahar* declaring Lokenath as the new owner of the property and ordering the tenants to pay their dues to him.¹⁵

The manner of consolidation by the successful Zemindars is evident from the petition of Lokenath. He had bought properties from Ramkrishna Roy, Maharaja of Nattore (Rajshahi) and Iswarchandra Roy, Maharaja of Nadia in the Nadia District. Now he proposed to rename them into two groups and requested for separate demands to be prepared accordingly. Sir Archibald Seton forwarded the petition which after some delay was ultimately approved. Writes Maharaja Lokenath, 'My former Zemindarry Dhee Mehurpore etc. and Dhee Tezpore in Pargunnah Rajepore belonged to Raja Ramkishan and my late acquired Zemindarry Dhee Mangulparah** Dhee Surbangpore, Dhee Hajeepore and Dhee Nabauthatty, formerly was the property of Raja Iswarchand Roy (Nuddea) owing to a separate Tahood being executed for each Dhee*

¹³ Cossimbazar Raj Records. Nadia Properties Sls. 7, 6.

¹⁴ IOR. Bengal Board of Revenue Consultations of 28 August 1798, No. 2.

¹⁵ Cossimbazar Raj Records. Nadia Properties, Sl. 9,

**written 'Mangunparah' as the translator did not distinguish, 'na' should be read 'la',

*Dhee or Dihi means groups of villages led by the one named.

I am put to a great expence and for this reason I presented a Durkhaust agreeable to article 3 of Section 7th, Regulation 48th, 1793, requesting that one Tahood might be taken and the Estates named Lokenautpore, upon which an order was received that agreeable to Section 6th of Regulation 25th, 1799, one Tahood could not be taken as the lands formed two distinct Zemindaries. It is therefore my request that on perusal of the Regulation, new names be allowed and two Tahoods executed which will enable me to pay up my Revenue without difficulty, this is my request.

*New Names**Old Names*

Pergunna Lokenautnagar
Pergunna Lokenautpore

Dhee Mehurpore and Dhee Tajepore.
Dhee Mangulparah, Dhee Surbangopore
Dhee Hajeeopore, Dhee Nabautbatty.'

The Board authorised the Collector of Nadia to comply with the request. 'Agreed, likewise, that the Collector be informed, the Board are not aware of any objections to complying with his application for having his Estates registered in the names requested by him.'¹⁶

The Nadia Raja continued to lose property to Lokenath. On 32 Ashar 1208 or July 1801 Maharaja Iswarchandra Deba Sarmanah sold the Parganas Ukhra, Plassey etc. along with 41 Mahals for a consideration of Rs. 20,555. By common consent the properties were deleted from the 'D' Register of Maharaja Iswarchandra and added to the properties of Maharaja Lokenath.¹⁷ Immediately Lokenath moved a petition to include these Parganas into Lokenautpore. 'Having purchased by Khosh Cowallah from Moha Rajah Iswarchand Roy, Kismut Plassey containing fortyone villages and Mehaults, the Jumma of which is Sicca Rs. 16,443-3-14-2, it is my request that these villages and Mehaults be annexed to my Estate which the Board were pleased to authorise being named Lokenautpore and that one Tahood and Kistibundee be received, dated 26th Poos (1208).' The Board however did not agree to the amalgamation of Pargana Plassey which was retained as a separate estate of Lokenath.¹⁸

¹⁶IOR. Bengal Board of Revenue, Range 74, Vol. 25, Consultations of 10 February 1801, No. 20.

¹⁷Cossimbazar Raj Records. Nadia Properties, Sls. 1 & 2

¹⁸IOR. Bengal Board of Revenue Consultations of 2 February 1802, Range 74. Vol. 45, No. 42.

With the departure of Seton from the district, Lokenath might have been apprehensive about the attitude of the Government in regard to this last purchase and immediately proceeded to establish his possession of the Pargana. J. Miller the new Collector of Nadia wrote to T. Graham, President Board of Revenue, on 13 June 1802, 'It appearing by the accompanying letter from my assistant that Rajah Lokenath has deputed an agent to solicit permission to complete the repairs of his embankments in the Plassee Pargunnah at his own expense and that the people now employed on the duty by Govt. may be withdrawn and as no objection occurs to me in vesting the Rajah with the superintendence of the work, I have authorised my assistant to comply with the Raja's request provided he will enter into a written engagement that the work shall be properly executed in a specific time and that in the event of the non-performance of his agreement, that he will subject himself to the displeasure of Govt. I shall keep a peon on the spot for the purpose of reporting to me occassionally the progress made in the work. I hope this measure will meet with the approbation of the Board. As there will be no necessity for Mr. Blunt's remaining any longer out, I have desired him to return to Kisenugger.' Miller was cautious to forward the letter of Blunt dated 12 June 1802, showing that the Govt. had already spent Rs. 824 for the repair of the embankment. He suggested that this amount may now be refunded by the Zemindar. The Board approved the matter asking the Collector to hand over the repair of the embankment to Lokenath,... 'the Board approve his giving over charge of the bunds at Plassee to Rajah Loknaut and that they desire he will report, as soon as the bunds shall have been completed, whether the works have been properly performed or otherwise.'¹⁹ The programme of growth was well planned. After consolidating his position in Murshidabad Lokenath had now established considerable hold on the adjacent district of Nadia.

iii) Rajshahi

Lokenath's plan of expansion was well prepared. If Nadia lay on one side, Rajshahi was on the other side of Murshidabad. It was natural therefore to build up estates there. On 22 Asar 1206 or July 7, 1799, Lokenath purchased in Revenue Sale at Murshidabad, Hoodah Raghunathpur in Pargana Rajshahi for Rs. 22,600. His Vakeel

¹⁹IOR. Bengal Board of Revenue Consultations of 18 June 1802, Range 74. Vol. 45, No. 35 & 36.

Krisnanath Roy petitioned to the Board on his behalf informing that a sum of Rs. 33,400 has been already deposited in the Treasury of Murshidabad of which Rs. 13,400 may now be deducted in part payment of the purchase money.²⁰ The other property purchased in the district was in the prosperous Pargana Amrool. The acquisition was made in a roundabout way probably because of the severe illness of Lokenath at the time. His Vakeel Krisnanath Roy bought in Revenue Sale Dihi Brajapur and Dihi Bhagsundar in Pargana Amrool on 14 Bhadra 1206 or 31 August 1799 for Rs. 6,600. Then eight days later on 22 Bhadra (1206) or 8 September 1799 he transferred the properties in the name of Lokenath, who immediately petitioned to the Board, 'The purchase was made for me and the amount of the purchase money was paid from my funds being Rupees 6,600, as he had not at that time received the necessary powers from me, he purchased the lands in his own name, since that he has sold them to me and given me the deed of sale and presented a petition for a transfer of the lands to my name. The Byenamah of the Board he has likewise given over to me. I pray, the Collector may be directed to make the necessary transfer accordingly.' Krisnanath Roy, the Vakeel also sent a separate petition to that effect. The Board approved the transfer.²¹ This matter has also been reported under 'Murshidabad', where the exchange took place.

Improvement in realising rents was a constant endeavour which marks the administration of Lokenath. He even paid money to get back estates leased out earlier so that he could organise better collections in those areas. Dihi Kamargaon in Rajshahi was one such area. He accepted the surrender of the lease of the property from Monohar Devdas. The transfer of the property by the lessee to his Zemindar Lokenath was executed on a eight anna stamp paper on 7 Jaistha 1208 (May 1801) and 2 Jaistha 1209 (May 1802) in two instalments. The lessor paying the expenses on both occasions.²² The keen sense about effecting better collections was the greatest contribution of Lokenath for the improvement of his estates. Unfortunately he could not witness the full flowerisation of his efforts, which saved his minor son and the estates in the sixteen years of darkness which followed his demise.

²⁰IOR. Bengal Board of Revenue Consultations of 9 July 1799, Range 73, Vol. 49, No. 33.

²¹IOR. Bengal Board of Revenue Conslt of 27 Sept., 1799, Range 74. Vol. 1, No. 77 & 78. and Cossimbazar Raj Records. Rajshahi Properties, Sls. 1 and 2.

²²Ibid., Sl. 3.

iv) Beerbhoom

The dispute with Raja Garoor Narayan Deva of Punchakote (Patchet) was however a different kettle of fish. Lokenath was already the Talookdar of Balliapur under Garoor Narayan who was the Zemindar. Lokenath agreed to pay the Kistibundy due for payment to the Government by Garoor Narayan, provided the Zemindar reimbursed him later. When Garoor Narayan failed to pay the money back to Lokenath, he obtained a decree against the Zemindar. The letter of W. Hunter, the Judge at Ramghur to William Cowper, President, Board of Revenue written on 6 February 1798 explained the whole affair.

'I have the honour to enclose a copy of a Kistibundy with a translation in English language, given by Raja Gurroor Narain Deb, Zemindar of Patchet with the consent of the Sudder Dewany Adawlut, to Raja Looknauth Nundy for the amount of a Decree passed by that Court against him, and to inform you that he has failed to liquidate the Kists due on the 15th Bhadun and 25th Maug of the present year 1204 B.S., and that I see no probability of his doing it without recourse to a sale of a portion of his Zemeendary.' The Kistibundy given by Nilambar Bose, the Dewan to Garoor Narain, began by mentioning that the Kistibundy was being given for the purpose of liquidating the amount of a Decree passed by the Sudder Dewany Adawlut against the father of Garoor Narayan. This document was dated 14th Aswin 1202 B.S. while the amount of decree was for Sicca Rupees 19,420-13-15 plus the cost of the suit, bringing the total to S^a Rs. 19,620-13-15.²³ The Board however agreed to the public sale of the property, which enabled Lokenath to buy the Zemindary rights of Balliapur & Chuttee in Pargana Shergurh by adjusting his decree on 9 July 1798. On 28 August 1798 the Board saw a statement exhibiting the amount of original Jumma of the original proprietor Rajah Goroor Narayan Deva, Zemindar of Patchet and the amount transferred Jumma by public sale. The summary is as follows :—

Original total Jumma	Rs. 40,797-13- 9
Minus properties lost by Revenue Sale	„ 17,608-14- 4
Remaining portion of the Jumma of the Proprietor	Rs. 23,188-15-15 ²⁴

²³IOR. Bengal Board of Revenue Consultations of 16 February 1798, (Range 73. Vol. 29.)

²⁴Ibid., Range 73. Vol. 35, No 27 of 28 August 1798.

This was however only the beginning of a bitter struggle that an older Zemindar put up against a new one. Garoor Narayan was no doubt deeply shocked as he considered the family of Kantababu to be his suppliants. Even if Lokenath had reached for the moon, Garoor Narayan would not have been more astonished. His letter to T. Graham, President Board of Revenue, was read on 29 March 1803, 'That the said District was formerly included in the Zilla of Ramghur until the year 1205, when Mr. Hunter was the Collector thereof, at that time Rajah Lokenauth Nundey, Neelamber Bhowse and Bisshun Chunder Bucket collusively, through the means of that Gentleman (Hunter) and his Dewan Ramsunder Mitre and others, all the Zemindarry of your Petitioner sold by public sale.' He prayed for getting back their possession. The letters moved backwards and forwards without much benefit to the complainant.²⁵ Lokenath as the Talookdar had been already in possession while the decree strengthened his claim further. The 17½ Mouzas of 'Chati-Baliapur' was recorded as being purchased in Revenue Sale for Rs. 480 only on 14 July 1798 or 1 Sraban 1205.*²⁶

v) Burdwan

The only purchase made in this district was in Pargana Dhenya where a big guest house (অতিথিশালা) of Kamal Lochan Sarkar was purchased for Rs. 30 on 6 Kartick 1209 (October 1802).²⁷ It is not clear why this stray property was suddenly purchased. It is possible that Lokenath bought this house to make a gift of it to his Guru, whom he gave large sums of money, gold, silver and properties.

vi) Calcutta

Calcutta and its suburbs always held great attraction to Kantababu and his family and though Lokenath was stationed throughout his life in Cossimbazar, coming sparsely to the City, he also never missed the opportunity of buying properties in Calcutta.

Ramcharan Kolya granted a patta for Rs. 6-10-0 annually to Krishna kanta Nandy on 19 October 1780 for 6 Bighas and 9 kathas of land in Ultadingi situated in Dihi Panchannagram. On the same date he sold

*Note : The present calendar has been introduced.

²⁵Bengal Board of Revenue Consultations of 29 March 1803, Range 75. Vol. 12, No. 88.

²⁶Cossimbazar Raj Records. Burdwan Properties, Sls. 66 & 86.

²⁷Ibid., Sl 4.

the same land to the same person for Rs. 1001. Now on 12 January 1796 Krisnanath Roy, the Naib of Maharaja Lokenath Roy Bahadur was granted a Kabooliat or lease.²⁸ This lease was probably either the authority to manage the property by settlement or a permit to look after the land. As further details are not provided it becomes very difficult to know why the Kabuliati was granted.

The other properties were the result of a decree of the Supreme Court. One Ramnarayan Misra took a loan of Rs. 40,000 from Kantababu, which he could not pay back. After his death the matter was referred to the Supreme Court on 27 December 1800, and a decree was passed in April 1801 or 18 Chaitra 1207. The value of the decree was Rs. 40,520 which was handed over by the Sheriff Edward Thornton. The properties that were acquired by the decree are the following :—

- (a) In town Calcutta, Old Bahubazar land more or less — 5 bighas
- (b) -do- In Burrabazar Chak —4½ kattas
- (c) In Jorabagan, north of Misra's house more or less —2 bighas
and 2 kattas
- (d) -do- In front of Misra's Thakuranibati, a walled premises
- (e) In Sutanooti on Nimtolla Ghat, more or less —10 kattas
- (f) In Panchannagram, Lakheraj land known as Halsey's
Bagan (garden) (including buildings and tanks) —31 bighas²⁸

Jagadumba Debi, the daughter-in-law of the deceased Ramnarayan Misra, appealed against the decree. From the papers of this case the full facts are known. It is confirmed that 'Ramnarayan Misser' took a loan of Rs. 40,000 in 1784 from Krisnakanta Nandy. After the death of Kantababu, Ramnarayan came to a settlement with Maharaja Lokenath in December 1800. Ramnarayan died in Serampore in January 1801 and the Sheriff of Calcutta sold Ramnarayan's dwelling house and other properties in April 1801. Ramnarayan's son Heramba appealed and sold a part of the properties (a, e and f) to Kumar Harinath Roy son of Lokenath, who was then a minor, on 2 August 1805, thus saving their dwelling house and other properties. Later Harinath after gaining majority challenged the sale in 1820. Heramba Misser died in 1822 and

²⁸Cossimbazar Raj Records, Calcutta, 24 Parganas and Howrah Properties, Sl. 77 (M—177).

²⁹Cossimbazar Raj Records, Calcutta, 24 Parganas and Howrah Properties, L 11/C. 31/L.2.

Jagadumba Debi became the sole heir and entered into a protracted suit with Harinath which was resolved by an Agreement between the parties in 1827.³⁰

Revenue Sale

While purchasing some of his properties in Revenue Sale, Lokenath had to be certain that his own revenues were paid in time. The Government was adopting a very strict attitude against revenue defaulters and were no respecter of persons. The Raja of Birbhum and later Prannath Roy, who had scarcely attained majority were confined for revenue default. The Bengal Revenue Consultations recorded on 4 May, 1798, that the Rani of Burdwan was forced to sell nine Hoodas to raise Rs. 1,40,294-9-0 to pay her revenue obligations. Even Lokenath faced problems. He was able to stop the sale of Shahzadpore at the last moment through the Collector of Murshidabad, because his co-owner Radhaballav Roy was a defaulter. Lokenath paid the share of his co-owner amounting to S^a Rs. 1108-4-8-2, as well as his own, to stop the property being put to sale. Later however he forced Radhaballav Roy to relinquish his right in Lokenath's favour.³¹ He was increasingly cautious about the payment of revenue and kept the Board informed about his payments. On 24 October 1800 he informed the Board of Revenue that his payments have been made into the General Treasury. Lokenath petitioned, 'In consequence of the Dussera Holidays I have not been able to collect the rents of my Zemindarry on account the Kist of Caurtick, but as I am obliged to pay in the Kist of Caurtick, I have borrowed the amount from a Banker and I have to request you will permit me to deliver in the undermentioned sums at the General Treasury in consequence of the danger of the road.'

Murshidabad	Rangpur	Dinajpore	Nuddea	Rajsahy	Total
S ^a Rs. 1685	3188	1090,	1431,	3839,	S ^a Rs.11233

The Board was satisfied and approving the payment wrote to the Collectors of the different districts, advising them to credit the sum paid by Lokenath on account of the arrears of Revenue.³²

³⁰The Agreement between Jugadumba Debi and Harinath Roy, executed on 11 January 1827, after the Supreme Court case between Jugadumba Debi and Harinath Roy. Equity side.

³¹IOR. Bengal Board of Revenue Consultations of 4 May 1798, Range 73. Vol. 32, No. 37.

³²Ibid., of 24 & 28 October 1800, (Range 74. Vol. 19) No. 2 & No. 2

It may be noted in this connection that arrears in revenue often resulted not for a shortage of money but for the callousness of the Zemindar concerned. This will be evident if the Revenue Consultations are followed in the year 1799-1800. Many Zemindars, particularly old Muslim Zemindars were ruined by their laziness which prevented them from paying revenue in time. The case of Noor Hyder of Mymensing particularly illustrates that by failing to pay almost insignificant sums of revenue in time, he lost most of his precious properties and was ruined on 11 June 1799. Many old Zemindars both Hindu and Muslim lost their Zemindaries as they did not realise fully how stringent the Revenue laws were and failed to take personal interest in their payments. As the old Zemindars perished it was left to their Talookdars, Mahlzamins, smaller lessees or other Zemindars to buy their properties at a considerably cheaper rate at the Revenue Sale.

The timely payment of Revenue could be prevented by other hazards as well. Lokenath always informed the Board about his difficulties and received in consequence a favourable treatment. Krisnanath Roy, the Dewan to Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur, Zemindar of Pargana Baharbund, makes such a petition to the Board, 'Month after month the Revenue of the Zilla of Rungpore are carried through the boundaries of my master's Zemindarry in their way from Rungpore to the city of Dacca and the Collector of Rungpore issues Perwannah at such times to the Naibs of my Pergunnah to prepare boats and provisions for the sepoy, collies etc., to which orders, the Naibs and muffusil amlahs comply to the best of their abilities, but the sepoy's escorting the Treasure often make improper demands, and if they are not acceded to maltreat the surbarakar and goomasthas; nor do they ever pay for any articles that are provided for them, but often insist upon six or seven Rupees being presented to them as a nuzzur selamy. In consequence of these oppressions the Teriff Chilmahry and Beejharah etc., which are Mehals in my Master's Purgunnah, are become deserted and a deficiency in the resource has been the result.' The prayer was that the sepoy's must be restrained and the Zemindar be allowed to account for the provisions given to them. The Board gave instructions for strict supervision so that the revenues were not delayed on the way by the greed of the carriers.³³ No doubt this measure eased the situation to a certain extent.

³³Bengal Board of Revenue Consaltations of 7 April 1801, Range 74. Vol. 27, No. 32.

The Extent of the Properties

The first two decades of the Permanent Settlement did not quite agree with the Zemindars, many of whom died during this time. It is not easy to say whether this was the result of the anxiety for the timely payment of Revenue or for unnatural exertion of themselves for the improvement of their collections. Only to mention the more important Zemindars there will be more than half a dozen names. Maharaja Doorlabhram, the famous 'Roy Dullub' of Clive's letters died in December 1793. Maharaja Nabakrishna Deb Bahadur better known as Nubkissen died on 23 February 1798. Raja Ramkrishna of Natore died in May 1802 and was followed by the great Maharani Bhawani of Natore on 12 September 1802. Maharaja Iswarchandra of Nadia died on March 1803 (17 Falgun 1209) and Maharaja Davy Singh of Nashipur died on 30 April 1805. Maharaja Lokenath expired on 12 May 1804. Thus almost all the Zemindars of any consequence were dead, leaving their estates to the minors to be managed by the Court of Wards, established by the Company. This factor alone greatly strengthened the Government's hold in Bengal and brought them close to the basic collection of rents and taxes through the Court of Wards.

T. F. Bevan, the Collector of Murshidabad informed the Board on 14 May, 'I beg leave to report to you the decease on the 12th instant of Maharaja Lokenaut Bahadur, Zemindar Purgunna Kuntoonagar etc. He has left two widows and a son about 18 months old.'³⁴ The Collector of Nadia, J. Donnithorne went a step ahead. After informing about the death, he deputed three officers namely Sumboochand Chuckerburty, Neelambar Paulit and Ganganarain Ghose to take charge of the collections of the Parganas Lokenathnagar, Lokenathpore and Plassey. He recommended that the estates may be immediately taken under the management of the Court of Wards under the 10th Regulation of 1793. But the Board advised him to wait and to withdraw his officers as it was not the intention of the Board at the moment to take the estates under their jurisdiction. The Board therefore recommended to Lord Wellesley, Governor General, 'that in view of the fact that the late Rajah has by Will made provision for the management of his Estates during the minority of his son, we see no strong reason and necessity for our interference in the management of the land '³⁵ Fortunately for the Estate and also for the

³⁴Bengal Board of Revenue Consultations of 18 May 1804, Range 75. Vol. 27, No. 36.

³⁵Bengal Board of Revenue Consultations of 29 May 1804, Nos. 14, 15 & 16.

minor Harinath, Lord Wellesley over ruled the recommendations of the Board of Revenue and ordered that the Estates' management will vest in the Court of Wards. The Power of Attorney left by the late Raja Lokenath was called for and recorded in the proceedings. There is nothing to prove that this was an authentic document. His Bengali Will, which will be discussed later was written in his own hand, but contained nothing in regard to the management of his Zemindary. Moreover the Power of Attorney was granted on the 7th May 1804 or only five days before his death, at the height of his ailment and even at its best cannot be fully relied upon. The Collector of Murshidabad had his own doubts and strongly recommended that the management of the estates must be taken up by the Court of Wards to prevent the dissemination of the minor's property. His view was upheld by the Governor General, Lord Wellesley.

The 'Power' and the 'Petition of the Attorneys' serve as a summary of the list of properties held by Lokenath at the time of his death. First the Power of Attorney will be quoted to be followed by the 'petition' and the recommendations of the Collector of Murshidabad, Bevan. 'Translation of the Power of Attorney granted to Kissennat Roy and Rada Mohun Ghose by Rajah Lokenat Bahadur.

'On account of my very infirm state of health, I find myself totally incapable of attending to the management of my concerns, you are my old and approved servants, I therefore constitute you my lawful attorneys, and entrust you with the care of my whole Estate both real and personal.

'You will take under your immediate charge the following landed estates :—Pergunnah Kantonagur, Pergunnah Baharbund etc., Pergunnah Lokenathpoor, Pergunnah Lokenothnugger, Dhee Bergpore etc., Dhee Kumargeon etc., Kismut Pergunnah Plassey, Hooda Chaklah Gopejan, Hooda Raghoonathpoor, Turruf Dooneegong Desalpara etc., Turruf Dunepoor, Pergunnah Dushazaree, Pergunnah Jelalpoor Nowarah, Kismut Pergunnah Chundlye, Dhee Boyleea, Turruf Chuttedugur etc., and Kismut Jogong and whatever other Malguzzary Property I may possess in the different Zillahs, also my Altumgha Jagire called Dhoabehara etc., in the district of Benares, my Lakheraj Dewotter Birt and Khangee Khamar lands, situated in Cossimbazar and elsewhere, my property in Calcutta consisting of houses rented to different persons, gardens etc., purchased, part by private and part at the Sheriff's sales

whether standing in my own or in the name of others, you will duly discharge, agreeable to my engagements, the public revenue assessed on my estates in the different Zillahs, the charges of my Zemindary amlah, my household and the Thakoor Shewah expenses, you will also pay according to the established rules, with any little excess that may be found indispensably requisite, the profits that may afterwards remain in hand, you will duly carry in to my Treasury, which you will take care of and keep regular monthly accounts of receipts and disbursements signed with your own signatures.

‘You will take proper measures to realise whatever may be due to me on written obligations, on running accounts.

‘I make over to your entire superintendence and direction, my Zemindarry Omlah, Sudder and Mofussil. You will in your capacity of my administrators keep up the necessary correspondence and put your official signatures to documents of every description relating to my Zemindaree. You will take the management of all the suits that may either now or hereafter be pending in any of the Zilla Courts; you will carry on any business that may be necessary in Calcutta with the Council, the Board of Revenue or the Supreme Court and to the orders you may receive from the Gentlemen of the Sudder, you will pay all due and proper attention. You will proceed in all transactions with caution and honesty, taking especial care to do that only which shall be productive of welfare and credit to my estate. In consideration of the troubles you will have as my attorneys, I hereby make an addition to your personal salaries of 100 Rupees a month in lieu of any commission that may be considered as attached to your offices.

‘The power of Attorney is to remain in full force until I shall either myself be restored to health or my son attain the age of 16 years and if you shall be called upon by Gentlemen in Authority to produce the Powers by which you act, this is the Paper you shall bring forward.

‘For these intents and purposes I have written this Power of Attorney.

Dated 26th of Bysack 1211 B.S., corresponding with the 7th May, 1804

Signed : Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur.

Witnesses : Juggernat Roy inhabitant of Srikhand, Nursing Debe Surmah inhabitant of Budderpore, Kissen Mungul Sein of Merepore and Kunjobehare Surmah of Sreepore. Certified to be a true translation T.F. Bevan.³⁶

The *Arzee* presented by the two Power of Attorney holders stated as follows : 'That the Rajah in consequence of labouring under severe indisposition for several months and having doubts of his recovery had in regard of their ancient services and confidence he reposed in them, constituted them his Attorneys and administrators to his Estates, thereby making over to their care and management, the education of his infant son and the whole of his property, that he had in his life time represented this to your Board, and they express their hope that the Will of the Rajah may be complied with and that the management of his different Zemindarries in various parts of the country be committed to them and they promise to be faithful to the trust. They give the undermentioned statement of his landed Estates paying Revenue to the Government.

Pergunna Kuntonugger and Hoddah Chucklah Gopejun etc.	in Murshidabad
Pergunna Lokenautnugger, Pergunna Lokenautpore,	
Kist Perg. Plassey etc.	in Nuddea
Turruf Rogoonautpore etc.	in Dinagepore
Kismut Jogong	in Burdwan
Pergunna Baharbund etc.	in Rungpore
Pergunna Dushhazaree	in Bhaugulpore
Turruf Beleapore and Chutee etc.	in Beerbhum
Dhee Bergepore, Kist Chundly etc.	in Rajshahie
Turruf Habaspore	in Jessore
Pergunna Jelalpore	in Dacca'.

The *Arzee* of the Ranees stated : 'The death of the Rajah and their sorrow in consequence, that they are left with his son, an infant, who with the property he inherits, is placed by the Will of the Rajah under the management and care of his old and faithful servants Kisshennath Roy and Radamohun Ghose; that they are particularly well pleased with the arrangement so made and that in its receiving your confirmation, the concerns of the Estate will prosper.'

³⁶IOR. Bengal Board of Revenue Consultations of 1 June 1804, Range 75. Vol. 27, No. 22.

The Collector remarked : 'I understand it to be the expectation of these persons Kisshennath Roy and Radhamohun Ghose, that in consequence of the Power of Attorney the whole of the real and personal property of Rajah Lokenath is to be entrusted to their management during the minority of his son, and not subjected to the control of the Court of Wards. By regulation 10 of 1793, I however consider this to be utterly out of the question, but that by Section 34 of the same regulation, they may be eligible to the situation of Guardians and as such I take the liberty of recommending them, as upon a minute enquiry into their characters, I have every reason to believe them worthy of such a trust, particularly Radhamohun Ghose, who has been for a length of years a confidential servant of the family and has always resided in the House at Cossimbazar. The other I believe been generally employed as a Vakeel in Calcutta.'

The Board's Order : They informed the Collector that 'the Board have addressed the Governor General in Council on the subject and they will hereafter furnish you with further orders as soon as they shall receive a reply from the Government.'³⁷

These documents give a fair idea of the property left by Lokenath at the time of his death which corresponds with his books of accounts.

B). Social Affairs

Lokenath was reared from his birth to be a Zemindar by his father. He had a Muslim teacher who taught him Persian. Thus becoming conversant in both Persian and English. There was a Pundit to teach Sanskrit and Bengali while accounting and book-keeping were taught by his cousin Baisnabcharan who had been trained by Kantababu himself.

Lokenath probably never himself ventured into industry or commerce except lending his name. His first and probably last brush with trading was the establishment of silk manufactories known as Filatures around 1789. After that the only business he indulged in was in lending money which was in charge of his boyhood companion, the trustworthy Raghu Gora. In fact after Baisnabcharan, Raghu Gora became the most important person though later being superseded by the very intelligent

³⁷Bengal Board of Revenue Consultations of 1 June 1804, Range 75. Vol. 27, No. 21 & 23.

Naib or Manager of the Estate, Krisnanath Roy, who became the Dewan of the Maharaja Lokenath, after the death of Baisnabcharan.

Lokenath from 1800 reverted to the ways of his father. He started afresh the contact with the English administrators and by small services and presents soon re-established the goodwill that was almost non-existent in the last few years. This was obviously considered to be the result of his ill health and continuous bereavement in the family. Thomas Brown the Resident of Cossimbazar, did not hesitate to enter into business transactions with him involving large amounts of money. Walter Ewer, the Sheriff of Calcutta also received small grants from him. In 1801-02 as many as 38 European names found place in his Cash Book. Berhampore was developing as a cantonment and soldiers were stationed there. At least three military men can be identified in the list, as Major J. Hunter (19th N. I?), Capt-Lt. H. Imlack and one of the two Lt. Pattons either John or Robert.

Five books of accounts are available relating to the period of Maharaja Lokenath. It is not difficult to trace the growing loneliness and the resultant confusion of the accounts. The death of Baisnabcharan in 1798 ends the orderliness of the accounting system. The following books of accounts are in existence :—

1. Cashbook of 1201 (1794-95) — Calcutta accounts, only from Baisakh to Sraban.
2. Ledger of 1202 (1795-96) — Household accounts, severely damaged
3. Ledger of 1205 (1798) — upto early Pous only, extremely damaged
4. Cashbook of 1208 (1801-02) — Rough Cash Book No. I
5. -do- -do- -do- -do- -do- No. II

I. *The Cashbook of the Calcutta accounts of 1201** accounts for only four months. It shows that the central financial control lay in Cossimbazar from where money was sent by *hundi* either for payments to the Government or for expenses. The only source of money in Calcutta was the renting out of small rooms (*Kuturi*). The garden at Ultadingi was being improved with an object of increasing its productivity as well as income. The accounts, though for a short period, are very well kept and it is possible to know the rates of the foodstuff consumed by the

members of the Calcutta house. Rice was always bought of two varieties, fine and coarse, *dal* of several varieties like the Moog, Arhar and Kalai, Sandesh was of only one variety.*

It seems that Baisnabcharan wanted to plunge into the salt business once again. A salt godown was taken on rent for Rs. 5-12-15 per month. Concurrently the boats were refurnished, repaired and new boatmen engaged. It seems that Baisnabcharan stayed in Calcutta from 21 April to 13 August 1794, to explore the possibility of starting the Salt business and returned home on his failure, hence the accounts relate to this period only.

The connection with Europeans were maintained. George Foley was regularly paid for his expenses. Samuel Turner, Company servant, was given Rs. 74-3-15 which was really the payment of a *nazar* of Four Mohurs, the price of which had increased from Rs. 64. Similarly Raja Jagat Chandra Roy was paid a *nazar* of three Mohurs which cost Rs. 58 instead of its real value of Rs. 48.

New manners and customs can be traced to be seeping in from the cashbook. Baisnabcharan bought himself an 'English umbrella', in the month of Ashar, and a '*pao*' or 250 kilograms of 'Chaha' or tea. He also indulged in smoking 'Amboori' tobacco, and making some silver tassels for his *hooka*.

The Calcutta organisation was more or less the same. Krisnanath Roy was working as the assistant dewan and was under the central organisation at Cossimbazar. There is however no trace of Mansukh Chatterji.

The Calcutta establishment was as under :—

1. Bakshikhana	—Rs. 110 per month
2. Chaitanya Charan Saha	— „ 100 „ „
3. Ramlochan Roy (Brahmin)	— „ 40 „ „
4. Gopimohan Dutta	— „ 40 „ „
5. Gobardhan Nandy	— „ 20 „ „
6. Imamadi Daftari	— „ 8 „ „

*No trace of the famous Rasogolla yet. It was started in Calcutta by Nabin Moyra in or around 1853.

Bengali Section :

7. Ramchandra Mukherjya*	—Rs.	30	„	„
8. Bhabani Charan Sen	— „	30	„	„
9. Banshidhar Nandy Poddar	— „	30	„	„
10. Gopinath Roy (Brahmin)	— „	14	„	„
11. Ramkumar Pal	— „	12	„	„
12. Gokul Chandra Banerji*	— „	10	„	„
13. Ramchandra Daftari	— „	4	„	„
14. Santiram Daftari	— „	3	„	„
15. Forha Peada	— „	4	„	„
16. Khoshan Methar (Sweeper)	— „	4	„	„

The accounts are clearly written and well constructed. The owner is now always referred to as 'Maharaja Bahadur' and Baisnabcharan always has the epithet 'Dewan' to his name. Sometimes he has been referred to as 'Dewanji' also.³⁸

II. *The ledger of 1202 (1795-96)* deals with the household expenditure of Cossimbazar. Unfortunately this book of accounts has been very severely damaged. The ledger heads are as under :

Income : Expenditure :

1. The worship of the deity Sri Sri Laxmi Narayan Dev.	Torn.
21 Pages torn**	
2. Gift Account	Rs. 990- 4- 5
3. Miscellaneous Expenses	„ 14,445- 3-15
4. Personal Expenses	„ 6,529- 1- 5
5. Building Dept. Expenses	„ 1,552-11- 0
6. Garden and Orchard Expenses	„ 649- 0- 5
7. Boat Dept. Expenses	„ 855-11-15
8. Stable Expenses	„ 769- 3-15
9. Cow-house Expenses	„ 774- 0-15
10. Rent and Taxes payment	„ 115- 1- 0
11. Stationery	„ 55- 9-10

*It became customary at this time to write the names of the Brahmin employees on the top of the list irrespective of their salary or position, it is therefore noted in the above list where it is not clear in the surnames.

**Cashbook of 1201 (1794-95) The Calcutta accounts of Baisakh to Sraban.

**The pages lost related to Samajbati, General Fund, General Puja and worship, salutation fees paid to Brahmins etc.

Income : Expenditure :

12. Unspecified Expenses		Rs.	123- 3- 0
13. Expenses for Kashi (?)		,,	43-14- 0
14. Brindaban House Expenses		,,	1,046- 8-10
15. General Salaries		,,	358- 0- 0
16. Loan Book	Rs. 8,191- 5-15	,,	8,191- 5-15
17. Court Expenses		,,	1,018- 0- 0
18. Land purchase Expenses		,,	15- 0- 0
19. Batta (Commission)		,,	13- 3-10
20. Building a 'Mandir for the deity		,,	399- 9-10
21. Profit Book	Rs. 26- 0- 0		×
22. Buying and selling of goods	,, 4,254- 2- 0	,,	4,380- 9- 0
23. Zemindari Expenses		,,	6,217- 4-10
24. Dasharath Dallal of Maldah	,, 143- 0-15		×
25. Gurudas Poddar, shop-owner in Sripur	,, 622-14 -0	,,	652- 0-10
26. Baisnab Nandi (Not the Dewan)	,, 2,337-10-15	,,	2,328-13-10
27. Shibaprosad Mukhopadhaya, shop in Kalikapur but resident of Khagra	,, 23-11-15		×
28. Radha Ghosh, Milkman	,, 256-14-10	,,	256- 0- 0
29. Biswanath Sanyal, shop-keeper	,, 3,064-14-10	,,	2,207- 4- 5
30. Gopce Posharee (General merchant)	,, 317- 2-15	,,	499- 5-10
31. Loharam Kalu (oilman)	,, 489- 1- 5	,,	603-13- 5
32. Paban Pal Kumar (Potter)	,, 95- 5-10	,,	84- 0- 0
33. Panchanand Kabi	,, 196- 3-10	,,	183- 7-10
34. Badi Mistri Kamar (ironmonger),,	10- 0- 0	,,	2- 0-0
35. Bhaiaram Kamar (do-)	,, 3- 0- 0	,,	3- 0- 0
36. Bhikhari Kamar (-do-)	,, 24-12- 5	,,	29- 5- 0
37. Swarup Kamar (-do-)	,, 28-15-10	,,	29- 0- 0
38. Kanai Mistri Kamar (-do-)	,, 43- 6- 5	,,	57-11-10
39. Nihan Kamar (-do-)	,, 26-11-15	,,	26- 0- 0
40. Charan Behara (water-supplier)	,, 73-15- 0	,,	75- 3- 5
41. Baratalloo Kagaji (paper maker of Chunakhali)	,, 82- 0-15	,,	82- 6-15
42. Sadabadi Kagaji -do-	,, 9-10-15	,,	9-11- 0
43. Nitai Panjogar (betel supplier)	,, ×	,,	3- 0- 0
44. Nihan Majur (day labour)	,, 29- 2 -0	,,	29- 2- 0

45. Sadaradi Patowar (jute supplier)	„	58- 5-15	„	42-11- 0
46. Meer Bootan Dorji (tailor)	„	57- 2-10	„	74- 0- 0
47. Shovani Rifukar (mender)	„	10-13-10	„	27- 5-15
48. Hingan Jab Dorji (Saddler)	„	1,420- 0- 0	„	1,420- 0- 0
49. Sheikh Sultan Tamakwala (tobacco-man)	„	60-10-10	„	58-12- 0
50. Mohan Chunari (lime supplier)	„	219-11- 5	„	217- 2- 0
51. Kader Baksh Chamina Baksh (Leather supplier)	„	143- 4- 0	„	149- 5-10
52. Parikshit Mandal (grocer)	„	113- 7-10	„	1- 1- 0
53. Sheikh Sayafulla	„	181- 8-10	„	121- 4- 0
54. Nandalal Saha	„	72- 0- 0	„	72- 0- 0
55. Giridhar Mandal	„	33- 0- 0	„	33- 0- 0
56. Ramkanta Nag	„	833- 1- 0	„	833- 0- 0
57. Laxman Ruiwala (cotton supplier)	„	10- 0- 0	„	10- 0- 0
58. Indranarayan Malakar	„	34- 4- 0	„	34- 2 -0
59. Kalisankar Malakar	„	12- 7- 5	„	12- 7 -5

The pattern of 1200 B.S., is followed so closely that for clarification the older ledger can always be referred to. The *Saikar* or *Sekra* or silver-smiths follow and then comes the long list of minor accounts. The expenses of marriage of somebody in the month of Agrahayan cost the household Rs. 1,160-11-15.

The establishment of the house continued to be more or less the same as it was in the ledger of 1200. A few changes in person were as immaterial as the small changes in their salaries. By and large the same staff continued and were paid the same remuneration.³⁹

The special feast introduced by Lokenath on the day that Kantababu died was something quite new. Instead of the usual '*Falar*' of the Baisnab, Lokenath fed his guests regular cooked meal with rice, dal, several vegetables and fish. Thus fish entered the house, though for a single day each year. This feeding of '*Machh-Bhat*' or 'fish and rice' was the traditional way of the social eating of the urban Bengalis. The Calcutta Society followed this custom of social eating. Lokenath, as he earned position and prestige in the society could not ignore this social practice by sticking to the rural customs for long. He therefore introduced

³⁹The Ledger of 1202 (1795-96). The household accounts (damaged).

it with a new ceremony. In spite of this single day's relaxation, most members of the family however, retained their strict vegetarian habits. It can be said with certainty that even for this single day the senior members of the household and the ladies did not eat fish, which were largely meant to be served to the guests.

The accounts show that Lokenath started building a temple for the deity but in some confusion the only door of the building was constructed in the northern side as a result of which the deity when placed in the temple, faced north which is not correct according to some opinions, so this was corrected about a hundred years later and the deity faced the auspicious South.

III. *The Ledger of 1205 or 1798-99* is not only badly damaged but is curious in many ways. Only 29 pages of this ledger is available and they are the first twenty-nine pages but there is no trace of the index or introductory pages which precedes such ledgers. Moreover the accounts in most of the pages are incomplete. There is no entry beyond the early part of Pous (December 1798). The totals of the sums have not been completed but left as they were. It seems that the ledger has been discontinued all of a sudden. The subject matter of the book is also exciting. It is an account of trading in silk and cotton cloths, listing several merchants with whom small transactions have been recorded. Except for the acquisition of the Hazipur property in Revenue Sale and a small account of personal expenses of the 'Maharaja Bahadur' there is almost nothing to relate this account with Lokenath even superficially. Patient probing into the torn and flimsy pages revealed a most interesting situation.

Baisnabcharan, who was called 'Chhoto Karta' (the young master)* tried, at least from 1798 (may be earlier), to revive the silk business of the family and perhaps partially succeeded. His death left the ledger unfinished and the business undone. It seems that the Hazipur Mahal was bought from the earnings of the silk business. The business though small was not altogether insignificant. There is reference to 'Resham Damask Chelli, which certainly meant that the silk cloth from Damascus was traded, worth over Rs. 6600. The advance by 'Chhoto Karta' on account of silk cloth was more than Rs. 7865. Cotton cloths of ordinary

*One should remember that Kantababu was persistently called 'Bara Karta' (Elder Master) in the books of accounts.

variety of Rs. 420-12-7½ were bought, part sale amounted to Rs. 109-4-0. Mr. Foley who had advanced money in 1191 for silk business was now paid back Rs. 1000. Mr. Gowan did business through one Madanmohan De worth Rs. 330 (p. 6). Silk cloth worth Rs. 798-2-5 was purchased and sold for Rs. 2458-12-15 (p. 7). Soft 'chellis' worth Rs. 541-5-7 (p. 10) and dress material worth Rs. 697-14-10 (p. 12) were sold. Baloochari sarees were bought for Rs. 24-8-0 and sold at Rs. 42-4-0 (p. 10), similarly Jamdani Bootidars were bought for Rs. 24 and sold at Rs. 29-2-5 (p. 11). The Hazipur Mahal was purchased in Revenue Sale for Rs. 12,779, of which Rs. 200 was paid to one Mr. Benn or Baign (p. 13). The list of properties show that Baisnabcharan bought Dihi Hazipur in Nadia in Revenue Sale for which he paid to the Collectorate Rs. 9371-12-7 on 18 August 1797. The Amalnama of the property was dated 1st September 1797. Baisnabcharan must have accounted for the property only after getting full possession, which brought the expenses to the ledger of 1798 or 1205. This account gives us some idea about the expenses that had to be incurred for the acquisition of a property and the delay that occurred in getting possession. Nearly Rs. 3500 had to be spent over and above the sum that was paid to the Collectorate. All this leads to the suspicion that the ledger belonged to Baisnabcharan Babu. The Hazipur property was sold by the wife of 'Chhoto Karta', Chaitanyacharan Debakanya in October 1799 to Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur for Rs. 12142-6-14. The ledger of Baisnabcharan remained incomplete and was later torn apart by insects, a sad commentary on the achievements of such a resourceful and brilliant man.⁴⁰

IV. *The rough Cash Books of 1208* (1801-02) have already been used in the previous chapters. The cash books relate to the accounts from 3rd Baisakh or 14 April to 12th Chaitra or 24 March. The beginning and the end has been presumably torn away by the ravages of time. This is a huge book of accounts in two parts having little less than a thousand pages. Almost everything can be found here, the Zemindaran earnings, the payments made to foreigners, the presents given to the family members as well as the household accounts. Everything has been put together in these marathon books of accounts which contain no doubt the most interesting informations. The only difficulty is that the hand writing of the accountant is so bad and he has always written with such a speed and hurry, that makes the study rather painful and difficult.

⁴⁰The Ledger of 1205 (1798). The Business ledger of Baisnabcharan (damaged).

Even in 1208, Maharaja Lokenath did not have any children so he looked after the nephews, only two of whom were left alive. In the beginning of the year he celebrated the marriages of his cousin Gunamanjari, the daughter of Gokulchandra to Brajamadhab and his niece Gunamani, the daughter of Gurucharan to Nabakishore. The two boys left alive in the family were the two younger sons of Gurucharan namely Shyamcharan and Ramcharan. Lokenath looked after Shyamcharan and Ramcharan like a foster father giving them the full benefit of a luxurious living. Beds made in Calcutta were sent for them, dresses particularly 'Dolai' and other winter clothings were ordered for the boys, the newly married girls and their husbands and also for the wife of Baisnabcharan and Gokulchandra who seem to be the only members left of Kantababu's family.

Lokenath had become much more religious in his outlook towards life. His failing health was almost a signal to his early death. The Will prepared by him in the early months of 1209 shows that he was expecting to die at any moment. It is not therefore unusual to find liberal expenses for religion which a person of Kantababu's mentality would consider lavish. The payments to the 'Guru's family at Srikhanda was also increased greatly.

All this large-heartedness proved imprudent in the long run. Shyamcharan and Ramcharan engaged Lokenath's son Harinath in a long drawn Supreme Court suit demanding one third share of the property, which they claimed was theirs by right. Similarly the Guru's family claimed regular maintenance and instituted a suit for a settlement of property, when the head of the family did not recognise them as his 'Guru'. This suit went up to the Privy Council before being resolved in favour of the defendant.*

Under the able management of Maharaja Lokenath and his Dewan Krisnanath Roy the Estate thrived. Both the collection and the disbursements were so regular that Lokenath on 29 Jaistha 1208 or 10 June 1801 paid the revenue of Baharbund, Dinajpur, Nator, Kamargaon, Durgapur, Mangalpara, Hazipur and Nadia to the tune of Rs. 73,469. He held

*In fact that is the reason why the books of accounts were so carefully preserved by the family. It showed that sufficient amount was given to the Guru's family individually each year. It was decreed that their relation was limited to the individual and not to the Estate.

his *Punyaha* on 9 Ashar or 21 June receiving homages from all parts of his Zemindaries both secular and religious.

He kept close contacts with the administrators, the English Company's servants on the one hand as well as with the Nawab's family, by regularly sending them *nazars* during Dussera and mango-baskets in the summer. The presents of fruits, vegetables and provisions were also made to the Englishmen stationed there. Mrs. Stuart, the wife of the Registrar of the Sadar and Nezamat Diwani Adalat, was once presented with flower pots desired by her. The amount spent was never large but it was enough to maintain good relations.

Zemindari problems and suits had already started. Several suits were instituted by Raja Debi Sing for the enhancement of rents. Many decisions were in favour of Lokenath as in the case of Chak Brindabanpore (No. II—22 Jaistha/2 June). The Tajpur decree was also in favour of Lokenath. This being a difficult case there was great rejoicing. Rs. 80 was spent for the Amlas, Rs. 300 was the expenses for the Court, one Mr. Dogrell took a fee of Rs. 3 and Rs. 90 was spent as *nazars* to a few Englishmen. (No. I 29 Jaistha/10 June). The Chunakhali suit was also won. A mangobasket worth Rs. 17 was sent to Patterson. What is interesting here is that as the amount of *nazars* dwindled the amount of *dalis** went up. One dali would cost sometimes over Rs. 180. (No. II-5 Pous/18 Dec.).

Lokenath's relation with other Zemindars was not always cordial. He sent in his petition as soon as a part of the Punchkote Zemindari came up for Revenue Sale and ultimately purchased it. This was the same Raja Garurnarayan whom Kantababu revered with several gold mohurs for allowing the deity 'Ragunathji' to be brought to Cossimbazar. Lokenath however did not let sentiment come in the way of aquisition of property. Similarly a loan of Rs. 1500 was given to Raja Iswarchandra of Nadia who kept a taluk as security. If he failed to repay in time the taluk would become a part of Lokenath's property (No. I—17 Jaistha/29 May). This came about sooner than expected, as on 32 Ashar 1208 (barely a month and a half later) Raja Iswarchandra Deba Sarma sold his Parganas Ukhra, Plassey and 41 Mahals to Lokenath for Rs. 20,555. The success of this deal undoubtedly led Lokenath to claim the Bhowanigunge Haat.

*basket of presents.

The illness of Lokenath is reported from time to time by the purchase of medicines. He also regularly purchased the horn of Rhinoceros for Rs. 25 for making medicines (No. I—10 Sraban/13 Aug.). One wonders whether he was using it as an aphrodisiac. He repaired all the boats including the Mayurpankhi and went out into the river more for pleasure and health than for travelling. One such visit is recorded when he went out into the river on 29 Ashar and stayed in the boat till 2 Aswin. He went up to Bidupara in Nadia (the opposite side of the Ganges to Plassey). This place so much enamoured him that he started building a house there on the banks of the Ganges. He sent orders for quick building as a result of which beams, rafters, doors, windows and other wooden parts were sent by a quick boat from Cossimbazar. It was during this journey that the Maharaja met the Governor. He also had the opportunity of doing some service to him when the anchor of the Governor's ship got caught in the undergrowth of the river and could not be raised. The anchor was cut for the Governor's departure. Later Lokenath recovered the abandoned anchor and sent it back to the Governor (No. II—6 Aswin/20 Sept.). On this occasion Lokenath paid to Mr. Edmundstone (most probably Neil B, the Secretary in the Secret Dept. Rs. 1000/-, Rs. 200 to Mr. George Udny of the Supreme Council, Rs. 105 and Rs. 19-8 was spent in the office and for payment of *nazars*. Lokenath's own cost was Rs. 598-10-0, add to this the food expenses of his staff and the total came to about Rs. 750 (No. I—29 Bhadra/12 Sept.). He was accompanied by Krisna Behari Chatterjee, Tej Sing Jamadar and nine others, Firoz and Madan Sotabardars, 2 Nazirs, three Pathan bodyguards Sahajad Khan, Nazim Khan and Nazaf Khan. Sahabaz Peada was there with four others. When the Mayurpankhi came back the 19 dandis were paid at the rate of Rs. 2-12-0 and the extra Manjhi at the rate of Rs. 3 per month amounting to Rs. 175. Gossaindas Manjhi and Khoshan Manjhi were in charge of the boat. The Rangalal boat kept contact between Lokenath and Cossimbazar.

The social contacts were kept up. Sweets were sent by Seth Abhoychand (Jagat Seth's nephew, son of Maharaja Swarupchand) when his son's marriage was settled. The bearer was paid Rs. 2 on 29 Jaistha or 10 June. Lokenath had now a larger staff than ever. He had purchased guns but was now advised to buy bayonets, which he did, each of the 4 bayonets cost Re. 1 each (No. II—16 Jaistha/28 May). Most of the older staff was retained and he added to them considerably.

The contingent of the ten Pathan bodyguards each of whom was paid Rs. 6 looks significant. Was this an attempt to live more safely as a large amount of money was kept in cash balance, in the house, for example Rs. 43,006-2-15 on 27 Aghran (18 December), or whether this signifies a deterioration of law and order in the country or whether this was merely a show of wealth and prestige?

In 1208 the story of Lokenath was like a fairy tale. He had everything. There were elephants and horses in the stables, which was made even fuller by the addition of two more horses for pulling the carriages. One was bought for Rs. 101 and the other for Rs. 71 (No. II-23 Baisakh/4 May). The cow-house was full of cows giving all the needed, milk, the gardens and orchards were thriving, giving forth vegetables, fruits and particularly mangoes. There were beautiful boats on the river and carriages for the road. The bird house was full of Munia-birds and pigeons. There were four Jamadars, ten Sepoys, ten Pathan bodyguards, innumerable peadas, sotabardars, khidmatgars, chopdars, manjhis, malis, masalchis, sais, gheseras, hazras etc. etc. etc.

Everything was there including plenty but the most vital thing was absent. Lokenath was still without a child. What would all these properties mean without a son. So the gods were worshipped with the prayer for an heir. The family deity was regularly worshipped. The Mahotsavs or great festivities were now held more frequently with increasing cost, denoting the urgency for a child. On 5 Aghran or 19 November, Kavikankan Chandi (A famous book of poems eulogising Durga, the consort of Shiva) was sung in the house. Lokenath's special foods now included 'pista, kissmiss and badam' (pistachio, sultana and almond), all of which pointed to only one direction.

At last God was appeased and Lokenath's wife Susharmoyee was with child. She passed through the tremulousness of the early months without miscarriage. While Lokenath hoped that he might have a child, he was afraid of not being alive to see it born. He was very ill again and apprehended death. Under such circumstances he wrote his Will. It was written in hand in Bengali a translation of which is given below. The translation has been made from the copy preserved in the Record-Room as the original had been submitted to the Supreme Court in the suit instituted by the Guru's family which went upto the Privy Council.

Translation of the Will of Maharaja Lokenath.

'Glory to Laxminarayan.

I, Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur am writing my Will as follows:

My late revered father made a Will on 16th Magh of 1188 Sal which I have followed to the letter and have made expenditures in total and absolute conformity to his Will.

Sri Sri Thakurji's expenses will be met from the grant of Rs. 10000 per annum from the Duhabehara Jaigir (a). His worship and celebrations will be carried on from that annual grant. My late father had assigned this amount of money for the worship of the deity. I have after his death followed his instructions and have annually spent the grant for the puja and worship of the Deity. Moreover Rs. 19000 (nineteen thousand) was assigned annually out of the income of the Pargana Kantanagar for the feeding and sheltering of the poor, the Samajbati, the expenses of the Brindabandham and worship of other deities at various other places. I have followed the wishes of my father who is now a resident of the Baikuntha and have spent the full amount of money every year as had been laid down by him. Over and above these amounts, the sum of Rs. 57000 (Fiftyseven thousand) has been annually spent according to the 'list' (b) left behind by him and the expenditure has been strictly according to that order. I wish that all my future generations will continue to do the same.

I Will that from now on Rs. 2400 annually shall be paid to my 'Gurudeva' from the income of my Zemindary Pargana Lokenathpur. My Gurudeva and his representatives will receive Rupees twentyfour hundred from the income of my Zemindary Pargana annually. The profit of the Pargana Kantanagar has been assigned for religious and pious duties as well as for the worship of the deity. It will remain so. According to this Will only Rupees Twentyfour hundred will be payable annually from the profits of my Lokenathpur Pargana only. It will be paid to my Gurudeva and to the representative who will take his place from time to time.

No one should be allowed to gift, destroy or sell these two Parganas and the Jaigir referred to in this Will. If any of my descendants gift, sale

(a) The Ballia Jaigir.

(b) This word has been used in the Original Will.

or in any way change the character of the two Parganas and the Jaigir it shall be null and void and considered invalid.

Item Two : My wife Rani Susharmoyee is at present pregnant. If she bears a male child then that son of mine will inherit everything I have. It should be noted here that I had earlier adopted a son, who has died in his infancy. If my wife bears a son, he will be my true and lawful descendant. When he will come of age and attain majority, he will perform and cause to be performed the worship of the deity and the other religious and pious duties as has been laid down in the Will of my father and my this Will. If my wife fails to give birth to a male child and has a girl then I authorise my wife Rani Susharmoyee to adopt a son so that the name of mine and my forefathers will be preserved and our dead souls will receive the annual water and provisions (pinda) from the adopted son as has been laid down (in the Sastras).

That is the end. 1209 Sal, 12th Kartick.'

Even from the Will of Lokenath it can be concluded that he did not inherit the practical far-sight of his father. In spite of it he made a good impression among the people who admired his well meaning policies and gentle behaviour. The poet of 'Kantanama' who was probably his contemporary, admired Lokenath. It is almost impossible to translate the simple verses of Manulla Mandal written in his village idiom, but a translation may be attempted in prose. Writes Manulla Mandal in the 34th page (of the printed book) of Kantanama, 'Lokenath looked after his people very well. He had various ways of looking into their welfare. While he ruled, the people were very happy. He was never harsh to anybody and his people considered him to be a king selected by them. The piousness of Lokenath Raja is known throughout the world. He gave three lakhs gold Mohurs to his Guru. He donated food and clothings to thousands of people. He gave away gold and silver to all those who wanted them. In this way his whole life was a gift giving ceremony. Having the name of God constantly in his mind, he made gift-giving his religion. It is very difficult to describe the piousness of such a king with mere words. There is none who can be compared to him in religiousness and piety.

'Then in his household was born a son, Raja Harinath, whose beauty was unsurpassed in the whole world. The king was very glad at the birth of the son and made a lot of gifts to the guests and relatives. Whosoever went to him got gifts of foods, clothing, gold and silver. Nobody can

estimate how much he gave away in his joy to the thousands and thousands of guests who assembled to see the child. As the days of joy ended the days of sorrow came. God wanted to have Lokenath Raja as His counsellor, so he took away the king. Harinath Raja was a minor solely dependent on the father and mother. The father went to the heaven and was immediately placed in the midst of the Baikuntha.*

It is interesting to find that the poet was not even known to the family. He had come to Cossimbazar much later during Raja Krisnanath's (Harinath's son) regime when he was already an old man and was enamoured by his behaviour. The picture of Lokenath drawn by the poet is interesting in spite of the hyperbolic passages. Three things clearly come out (a) Lokenath was considered by his contemporaries as a pious and religious person and a conscientious administrator who never oppressed his people. (b) He was famous for his gifts which increased many folds in the joy of having a son and (c) He died soon after the 'annaprasan' or first rice ceremony.

Maharaja Lokenath was born on 4 April (23 Chaitra) 1764. He scarcely completed his 40th year and died on 12 May (30 Baisakh) 1804.

His death was reported by the Collector to the Board of Revenue who informed the Governor General in Council on 29 May 1804. They also reported about his large estates in Murshidabad and Nadia and sought instructions regarding the management of the properties as the son was a minor.⁴¹

The matter came up before the Governor-General in Council on 14 June 1804. Thomas Graham, the President, Board of Revenue reported :—

'We have now the honor to report the death of Rajah Locknauth who possessed very large estates in the districts of Nuddea and Moorshedabad. The Raja's heir is said to be a child of 2 years old and under the present regulations, it would be incumbent upon us to take the estates under the Jurisdiction of the Court of Wards but as we understand that the late Rajah had by Will made provisions for the management of his estates

*Manulla Mandal, Kantanama (1250 B.S.) Ed. Nalinikanta Bhattachali, Dacca Sahitya Parisad Granthabali No. 8 (1913).

⁴¹Bengal Records, Board of Revenue Series, 12,466, 29 May, Letter No. 16, 1804.

during the minority of his son, we see no strong necessity for our interference in the Management of the lands . He however suggested, 'Should your Lordship however deem it necessary that under the regulations the estates should be taken under the Jurisdiction of the Court of Wards, we should deem it advisable to attend to the wishes of the late Rajah, in the selection of the Officers to be appointed to manage the lands.'

The Order of the Council was communicated by G. Dowdeswell, Secretary to the Govt. in Revenue Dept. and the proceedings were endorsed by Lord Wellesley, Governor-General, G. H. Barlow and G. Udny on 14 June 1804. The Order ran as follows :—

'Gentlemen—I am directed by His Excellency the most noble the Governor-General in Council to acknowledge the receipt of a letter from you dated 29th Ultimo reporting the death of the late Rajah Lockenauth.

'2. You will hereafter be furnished with the Orders of Government upon the proposition contained in your address of the 13th April last. In the meantime the Governor-General in Council desires that you will take charge of the late Raja's Estate, and provide for the management of the lands, which have descended to his child under the general Regulations respecting the management of the Estates of minors.

'3. In this and similar cases, the Governor-General in Council entirely approves of your giving every attention at the testamentary provisions of the deceased, which may be considered with the general laws and regulations of the Country.'⁴²

The management of the property was taken under the Court of Wards and technically the Governor-General in Council became the guardian to Harinath Roy.

Thus with the death of Maharaja Lokenath a chapter of history in the house that Kantababu built was closed. With the property being managed by others, the urge to grow had to be suspended for the time being. For about 16 years there was little development, though it was more than sufficiently compensated by good organisation. All the

⁴²I.O.R. Bengal Rev. (Misc.) Consultations, Range 89. Vol. 26, Proceedings of the Ward Consultations of 14th June 1804.

properties collected by Lokenath were ably administered under the supervision of the Company. The Management of the Court of Wards efficiently protected the property from being scattered away.

The story that started with Kantababu buying a jack fruit tree in 1742 thus reaches a port in 1804. Now there is a pause, a break in the link, perhaps a gap in the cultural flow from father to son. In its stead the boy grows amidst relations, greedy for money and power, officers who turn avaricious and decadent.

After sixteen years one wakes up in an entirely different world, another society, a new culture, people with a different outlook and a government which in spite of its increasing efficiency did not have the same attitude towards the natives.

CONCLUSION

The Second volume of the book deals with thirtyone years from 1773 to 1804, of which the first twenty years belong to Kantababu and the rest to his son Lokenath. This part deals with the political career of Kantababu, as the Banian to the Governor General, followed by his acquisition of properties, the Revenue disputes, the Bijoygarh episode, his relation with the foreigners, his society and the last chapter is on Maharaja Lokenath who died in May 1804. With the death of Lokenath who had lifelong been the shadow of his father, a period closes. The socio-economic scenery also changes with the new political set up.

Hastings established a stable and strong government in India, which can rightly be called the corner-stone of British Imperialism. Kantababu as the Banian to Hastings took almost no part in the programme of expansion and subjugation. He looked after the domestic and political welfare of his Governor and served him well. The relation between the two has also been discussed in some detail.

The most interesting feature that emerges from these studies is that Kantababu had gained the position of advantage as the Banian of Warren Hastings even earlier in life, later as the Banian of the same person when he was appointed the Governor General, he did not get any further advantage but was rather restricted in acquiring properties to a great extent, in fact his office became a definite hindrance. Thus it is found that though his annual income before becoming the Banian of the Governor General went upto Rupees ten lakhs annually, it was much lower at the end of his career in 1794 January, when it was not more than Rupees six lakhs per annum.

The acquisition of properties created a lot of troubles to Kantababu mainly because he was the Banian which made him a pawn in the struggle for power. It goes to his credit that with the support of his master he could extricate himself from all difficulties. Accusations were created to vilify him but none of them could be proved; this in itself was a great achievement. He kept a close watch on the enemies of Hastings and was quick to inform Vansittart or Hastings as it was necessary, about any move that were contemplated. His influence and closeness to the

Governor General reached such a stage that Pattle, a Company servant was reluctant to cross him. For this same reason Gen. Clavering, Monson and Francis disliked Kantababu more than his master. Francis greatly disliked that Rajballabh and Reja Khan were both friendly to Kantababu and listened to his advice.

There is enough material to draw a rather clear picture of the man who in the latter part of his life became distrustful of public men to the extent of stinginess. His relation with the Europeans as well as his experience with administrators, many of whom were well known to him, was far from satisfactory. His persistence in the disputes of the Revenue Dept. gives an idea of his strength of mind, which was again demonstrated in Bijaygarh, where his personal bravery in the face of physical assault, brings out the rarest quality of a native, brought up in a village community amidst Bengal's commonest surroundings.

If one is able to go through the long and monotonous chapter on Revenue disputes what will strike the reader most is the cantankerous persistence with which Kantababu defended himself, of course with the wise counsel and leadership of Hastings. Self preservation had become his second nature and he fought tooth and nail for what he considered to have been rightfully acquired by him. Even at the risk of boring the readers with utter tedium by quoting the Revenue Department Consultations and Proceedings, the struggle has been narrated property-wise to give a full account date by date of the disputes.

Similar procedure has been adopted earlier in regard to the Salt disputes also. There also the best and the worst of Kantababu comes to the surface. His intelligence and dogged fighting nature is as much on display as his cunning and practical earthly approach to the solution of a problem. There is of course nothing to prove that he ever bribed any Company servants or officials. But the scores of nazars, tradings, services and hundred little gratifications rendered by him leave little doubt that he took good care to keep the Europeans, at least quite a few of them, obligated to him. Richard Barwell who knew him well, considered him as a necessary evil, many others undoubtedly had the same feeling. The honour with which the Nawab's mother and guardian Munny Begum treated him, certainly shows that she held Kantababu in high esteem. She seems to have established a personal friendship with him also. These were not isolated feelings or honour shown to him and it can be rightly

assumed that Kantababu had many more friends amongst the Europeans, Company servants and Indian administrators than could be listed in this discourse. The friendship he established with Panna while a prisoner of Raja Chait Singh speaks highly of his diplomatic capacity.

It should never be forgotten that Kantababu came to age under the Mughal Government, where bribery, gratifications and pay-offs were the order of the day. For quite sometime many of the East India Company officials also could not extricate themselves from this quagmire of illegal and extraordinary payments. So it will be naive to assume that everything was above board and as straight forward as they were made out to be.

Kantababu knew the Mughlai manners but he also attuned himself to the changed times. In the Mughal times the opportunities to an ordinary businessman were few, which were again couched in heavy payments to the officials. The common man therefore even if he was enterprising could scarcely improve his status. The East India Company created a new social consciousness which offered great opportunities to the resourceful and industrious adventurer. A feeling of independence was created by the East India Company which led many people into new lines of trade. Some of them succeeded better than the others. Some of the trading commodities offered the opportunity for earning more profit with a small capital. The export of various items of goods to European countries also gave them a chance to earn large sums of money. Even supplying at the manufacturers level, Kantababu was able to keep 300 per cent profit on some of the varieties of silk goods. But he was only a second stage or a third stage supplier, who got the silk cloth and manufactured them into piece goods. Kantababu had, as a successful trader, made good profit utilising the money to purchase land and Zemindary which had become the most lucrative trade of the time.

It was abundance of energy and enterprise which led Kantababu to take so many different avenues of earning his livelihood. The unique opportunity offered by the changed times was fully utilised by him. He had the tremendous urge to rise to the top, like all self-made men, so it is not difficult to understand why he channelised his energies to so many different types of activities.

Hastings was directly involved with only two properties and a trade. The Salt production in the Hooghly district and the Cotubpore property

in Midnapore, Hastings forced Kantababu to relinquish. He granted the Ballia property to Kantababu after Bijaygarh, which was in 1793 transferred to a Religious Trust. Kantababu could have felt aggrieved having received almost nothing from the Governor General after serving him faithfully for 25 years. Could that be the reason of transferring the only property received from Hastings to a Trust ? It should be noted that he had already made ample provisions for the worship of the Deity by assigning the profits of Kantanagar Pargana for that purpose, which has been clearly laid down in the Will, made immediately after the arrival of the Deity, almost eleven years before making the Trust. Did Hastings reciprocate this feeling, as he never answered any communication received in England from Kantababu or his son Lokenath ? Yet they were in his hand as they can still be seen in Hastings' Collection preserved at the British Museum.

Regarding the Europeans' names and their identification a lot of problems had to be faced. Many names could not be identified at all. Certain English names like Becher and Beecher were thoroughly confusing. Smith being such a common name, presented difficulties in identification. Then there was the problem of the sameness of name. There was a William A. Edmundstone, member, Board of Trade and a Neil B. Edmundstone, Secretary in the Secret Department, which of the two Edmundstones received the 'nazar' ? The Bechers offer innumerable complications as they were both posted in Murshidabad. Thanks to the accountant who some times differentiated them as 'Char Becher' evidently meaning Richard and 'Judge Becher' obviously meaning John. In most of the places he did not feel like exerting himself and just wrote 'Becher junior' creating confusion all around. Same trouble is faced with Lt. John Patton and Lt. Robert Patton both of the 5th N. I. If the accountant got used to writing 'William Dunkin' which was certainly creditable of him as his writing 'Sir John D'Oyly'*, then all Dunkins to him became or had to be 'William Dunkin,' and would be written as such. Here James Dunkin the advocate to the Supreme Court was always written as 'William' even when the real 'William' had gone home long ago. Harringtons got confused with Hamiltons and Sunbeams and Minons and Winickies are as yet un-identifiable.

There can be a deeper study on the European accounts. Particularly known biographies can be supplemented by these interesting figures of

*which was written as 'Subjondoilly'.

their transactions. Groups can be found amongst the officials of the Company. Those who traded in groups were generally closer to each other, like Perreau and Palling or Hastings and Hancock. The accounts though interesting in themselves are difficult also. The simple income and expenditure account fail to reveal anything without elaborate explanations which are always lacking. It is even difficult to find whether the person in whose name the account was drawn, paid the money himself or it was paid for him by others in his account.

The account of Thomas Brown resident of Cossimbazar in 1801-02 runs as follows (assimilated from the Cash book of 1208) :

	Income	Expenditure:
12 Baisakh/23 April		Rs. 1498- 2- 0
21 Baisakh/2 May	Rs. 2000- 0- 0	,, 2000- 0- 0
14 Jaistha/26 May		,, 4000- 0- 0
5 Sraban/19 July		,, 1822- 3- 0
11 Sraban/25 July		,, 713-14- 0
12 Sraban/26 July	,, 5043-12- 0	,, 509- 6- 0
17 Sraban/31 July		,, 3056- 4- 0
11 Bhadra/25 August		,, 1012- 8- 0
17 Bhadra/31 August		,, 1020- 0- 0
3 Aswin/17 September		,, 3366- 0- 0
3 Aghran/17 November		,, 304-14- 0
11 Aghran/25 November		,, 609- 0- 0
17 Aghran/32 November		,, 612- 0- 0
	Rs. 7,043-12- 0	Rs. 20,524- 3- 0

It is not easy to find out why such heavy transactions were involved with the Resident or what was the purpose of such payments. The payments made to Walter Ewer, the then Sheriff of Calcutta, are easier to explain. The reason being the revenue sales that were conducted from the Sheriff's office, had to be known in time. As Maharaja Lokenath was a regular purchaser, he kept informations of such sales for which he did not mind paying regular 'nazars' to the Sheriff. Archibold Seton was another regular in the rolls of Kantababu and his son.

The account books also reveal the social conditions of the time. They not only show the salary of the people and their jobs but also describe the

changes in status and wages. In the earlier times, it is found, that the two persons getting the maximum salary were menials, the personal servant and the body guard of Kantababu. The Persian teacher or the clerks all got lower salaries. These books of accounts most certainly lean towards the argument that, say before 1775, there were no serious class distinction of wages between the *Bhadralok* (gentleman) and *Chhotolok* (menials). The distinction gradually became more pronounced and by 1795 the social division was complete. The caste distinction also became a recognised social manner. The rich became the guardians of the religion and the Brahmins, as the new government took full charge of the law and order. Rule of law became the order of the day and litigations had to become the main pastime of the wealthy.

The prices of the commodities show that Bengal was indeed the Paradise of Provinces. Food was both cheap and plentiful. The export of the Bengal rice to the East Indies and the Eastern Coast of India, right upto Ceylon (Sri Lanka) was regularly carried on by traders. The Bengal trade thrived with activity. Chinese goods came into the Bengal market earlier but its value increased following the Chinese Settlement in Calcutta in the Eighteen Seventies. The books of accounts give the prices of the daily household necessities as well as of the most items of every day use. The price of handmade paper and the community called Kagazi establish that making of paper had been one of the important cottage industries prevalent at the time. They also establish beyond doubt that the Chinese who settled here around the 19 June 1778 led by Atchun Chinese* introduced tea to the Bengali. That is why it is known by the Chinese name 'Tcha' (cha) and not by the English name 'tea'.

The religion of Baisnabism was modest in its form. Kantababu who continued allotting money for the worship did not change its simple character. He stipulated for the feeding and clothing of the poor and the destitute and created Samajbari for their shelter. The total allotment of Rs. 19000 annually cannot be considered extravagant when it is found that the expenses of the Deity, the food and clothing for the poor, the expenses of Samajbati as also expenses of worshipping at various other places like Brindaban were included in the directions. Probably he himself realised this and separately allotted the Rs. 10000 from the Ballia property for the worship of the Deity only. This helped

*Proceedings of the Revenue Dept. of 19 June 1778, Vol. 40 p. 3160-3162.

Lokenath in performing the religious duties and gaining name as a pious and religious ruler. The fund thus made available prompted Lokenath not only to increase his religious functions but also to fall a prey to the influence of his Guru and his family, who were not satisfied with the large gifts made to them, during his life time but got him to make a settlement in his Will trying to bind down his posterity. Here they exploited the weakness of Lokenath and took advantage of his joy at the hope of a progeny.

Kantababu's limiting the household expenditures to Rs. 57000 was extremely practical. He had the far-sight to see that improved income and social status would automatically lead to extravagant spending. He therefore limited the annual expenses of the family to Rs. 57000. His wisdom deserves an applause, particularly because of the wording of the limitation. He did not put any limit on Zemindaran or religious or essential expenses, but only limited the family's own expenses to a certain limit, knowing fully well that if one cannot spend for himself he does not spend for others beyond the necessary. The limitation of the expenses of the Sradh ceremony expenses to Rs. 40000 was also another important check on fruitless spending. Lokenath though he lived much more lavishly than Kantababu and sometimes spent freely, kept himself strictly within the bounds of the limitations. He was an educated young Zemindar, very knowledgeable regarding land settlement, easy in his manners, with cultivated honesty and straightforwardness. Whether this was the gift of the Permanent settlement or the law abiding administration of the Company, is difficult to presume. Many of the second generation of the newly rich practised honesty as a cult and taught it to their children. In this way the people in Company's Bengal started slowly to change in their character from the people of Mughal Bengal. Lokenath's religiousness was not a sentimental show of his heart but the manifestation of his honest outlook of life.

Yet throughout the 18th century the gold prices went on increasing. Whether the increase of the price of gold is the barometer for good trading or bad times, one remains baffled. The gold price first increased with the death of Emperor Aurangzeb in 1707, then it increased again after the battle of Plassey. Then for a long while there were different types of gold coins, having different prices, rising again after Hastings' departure in 1785. By the turn of the century the 'Nazars' came to be paid in silver and not in gold. The gift of fruits and provisions took the place of

gold. Even when Mohur was given, a *batta* was calculated and the payments were made in silver or in some other ways. Can it be concluded that with the advent of the 19th century gold was less and less used in actual transactions as their real value as legal tender increased ? Ornaments in gold became prevalent and probably gold was begun to be hoarded also. Did they hoard gold as there was more safety and less chance of being robbed or was it to fall back upon, if and when the English East India Company would leave India and the country would revert to its Mughal ways? It is a difficult question, but the answer will be probably 'both'.

What is most curious in the history of the time is that following the rise of mostly non-Brahmins into eminence, the fall of the Brahmin Zemindars from power. Nator, Nadia and Dinajpur were very important, large and powerful Zemindaries before Plassey. The rise of the non-Brahmins like Nabakrisna, Krisnakanta, Gangagovind and Debi Sing saw them slowly crumble into much smaller entities. This downfall is not easy to explain, if Nator was stricken by family strife why did the Maharajas of Nadia and Dinajpur lose their hold in so many of their properties; why their revenues were always in arrears and why did they sell their best properties at a cheap rate? These are questions which merely point out to the necessity of a much deeper and wider study of 18th century Bengal. Only when all these questions will be answered through many more researches into the period, then and then only a complete knowledge about 18th century Bengal will be available.

Before the book is ended let us pause for a while and try to assimilate why Kantababu's life had to be described so elaborately and what did we learn from his biography ?

It is curious that Kantababu's life became as extinct as the cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum under the dust of ignorance and apathy. There were so much material on him lying silent amidst the old records that it became a crying shame not to collect them. Now they have been put together to create the biography of one of the most interesting personalities of the 18th century. The Record Room of Kantababu's descendants also yielded a rich crop of deeds, documents and account books to give a definite dimension to his personality. Put together, if they can give a realistic picture of the person and his surroundings then the

toil of the biographer will be amply rewarded. The collected material has been at times quoted in full to facilitate its availability to the scholars.

Kantababu in some ways resembled the great Mozart whose importance in the history of opera is that, taking the forms as he found them, he filled them with living music, setting whatever words were given to him and giving those words the utmost musical expression of which their last particle of sense was capable. Similarly Kantababu had the most ordinary opportunities in his life, but he used those common circumstances and utilised them to their fullest capability. He laid the foundation of his house by his own hands and then created the steel frame and the super-structure all by himself. Working under restraining conditions in a country which gradually became more and more dependent to the prowess of the English arms he showed such industry and organising ability which would have been highly applauded, had he been the citizen of an independent country. He did not have many tools to carve his fortune other than his intelligence which he used diligently and reticently for the benefit of his master, his own self and family.

It was the most natural feeling of the head of the family to see that the house founded by him continued and prospered. He desired to safeguard the family and the properties acquired by him against all possible future evils. The only way he knew and adopted for doing this was the Baisnab way. It is customary for a Baisnab to dedicate all his actions and work, to God. It is a Baisnab saying that work is the duty of man but the result of the work is the blessing of God. So Kantababu took the only way he knew to protect his family and fortune from the onslaughts of time and depredations of the future. He dedicated his family and all his earthly possessions to Krisna, his guardian Deity.

He created a strong sense of religious consciousness in his descendants and bound them to continuous religious action as the servant (*sebayet*) of the Deity. Whoever became the proprietor of the Estate immediately became the servant of the God, creating a feeling that the Estate belonged to the God. The rituals they strictly followed opened the door to the philosophy of servitude and dedication.

The Lord has Himself said in the Srimad Bhagabat Gita :

‘The discipline that organises mind, the life-breath and the senses is *sattvika*. The discipline that leads to wealth, success and honour

is rajasika,'.....'One's own dharma, however imperfect is a safer guide, than the dharma of another, however perfect. Conscience is what matters. Follow your duty, Arjuna, as your nature dictates it. All work fetters, as all fire gives smoke. Only selfless duty saves.' (The Bhagabad Gita : trans. P. Lal, Canto 18. The Way to Salvation—pp. 102-103).

History has proved time without number that the dedication of Kantababu and the selfless service of the family proved to be the magical amulet which sustained them throughout the vicissitudes of time. If it is the desire of the Almighty, that history will also have to be related in due course.

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A. MURSHIDABAD PROPERTIES (Contd.)

1773-1794

No.	Eng. date	Date of the Deed	Item	Purchaser	Value
23.	May	"	"	"	"
24.	Aug.	"	"	"	"
25.	Sept.	"	"	"	"
1775-77					
26.	April	1775	27 Ramjan	Pargana Goyash from Rani Bhawani	301- 0- 0
27.	April	1776	29 Chaitra	100 Bighas of land at Bhabta	802- 0- 0
28.		"	No date	Purchase of Deshalpur etc. of Rani Bhawani	
29.	April	1777	30 Chaitra		722- 0- 0
1778-79					
30.	Nov.	1778	9 Agrahayana	Land in Bhudar	No value
31.	Jan.	1779	12 Magh	10 anna share of Pargana Dashazari	No value
32.	April	"	30 Chaitra	Land in Sripur	100- 0- 0
				Talooks of Jalalpur & Kampur	751- 0- 0
33.	August	1779	30 Sraban	House & garden in Cossimbazar	31- 0- 0
34.	Nov.	"	2 Agrahayana	Orchard in -do-	11- 8- 0
35.	"	"	No date	A house in -do-	22- 8- 0
36.	"	"	-do-		(Rent)
1780-81					
37.	Oct.	1780	28 Aswin	House & land in Sripur	Rs. 565- 0- 0
1781-82					
38.	May	1781	16 Jaistha	Mouzas Purandarpur, Mitrapur & Monoharpur	4,571- 0- 0
39.	"	"	"	A garden	1,500- 0- 0
40.	August	"	30 Sraban	6 anna share of Pargana Dashazari	1,251- 0- 0
41.	"	"	15 Bhadra	Taluk of Binodnagar	79- 0- 0
42.	Sept.	"	20 Bhadra	Mahal Jaikrisnapur	17- 9- 0
					(Contd.)

A. MURSHIDABAD PROPERTIES (Contd.)

1773-1794

No.	Eng. date	Date of the Deed	Item	Purchaser	Value
43.	Nov.	1781	11 Agrahayana	1188 3 bighas 17 kattas land in Cossimbazar	
44.	"	"	"	1 bigha 5 kattas with tank in Cossimbazar	539- 0- 0
45.	"	"	"	Garden land in Cossimbazar	88- 0- 0
46.	December	"	7 Pous	3½ kattas land in Kasimnagar	21- 0- 0
47.	"	"	"	-do- Lakheraj land	27- 0- 0
48.	March	1782	10 Chaitra	4½ kattas Bramhattor land	27- 0- 0
1782-83					31- 8- 0
49.		14 Jaistha	1188 Mahal Nainapur in Fatesingh Pargana		
	May	"	(Akheri means)		
		"	1189 (loan with 24% Int. per annum realised)	-do-	412- 0- 0
50.	June	"	2 Ashar	5 kattas Bramhattor land in Gopalghata	
51.	Nov.	"	19 Agrahayana	Revenue Sale. A mahal in Shahjahanpur	30- 0- 0
52.	Dec.	"	19 Pous	Banjetia village. 5 Bighas 4½ kattas land & a tank	1,724- 0- 0
1783-84				Radhaballabh Roy	225- 0- 0
53.	May	1783	7 Jaistha	Lakheraj land 2 B. 9 K. in Kasimnagar	
54.	"	"	No date	Bramhattor land 4 K. 10 g.	
				Lokenath Nandy	294- 0- 0
1784-85					31- 8- 0
55.	Aug.	1784	9 Bhadra	4 B. 13 K. land in Cossimbazar	72- 0- 0
56.	Oct.	"	22 Aswin	A Talook in Kasimnagar	120- 0- 0
57.	"	"	7 Kartick	A small house in Cossimbazar	201- 0- 0
58.	Dec.	"	24 Agrahayana	-do-	2 (Rent/
					Patta)p.a.
59.	"	"	17 Pous	3 K. Bramhattor land-do-	18- 0- 0

(Contd.)

MURSHIDABAD PROPERTIES (Contd.)

1773—1794

No.	Eng. date	Date of the Deed	Item	Purchaser	Value
60.	March	1785	8 Chaitra	1191 A creek	-do-
61.	April	„	28 Chaitra	„ The Chhayghari Garden*	„
62.	„	„	No date	„ 6 bighas land in Bhudar	„
The year of Hastings' departure.					
1785-86					
63.	July	1785	12 Sraban	1192 Taraf Baharia in Pargana Kulberia	Rs. 124- 0- 0
64.	Sept.	„	17 Aswin	„ A house in mouza Kasimpur	„ 75-13-12
65.	Nov.	„	2 Agrahayana	„ Lakheraj land	„ 66- 0- 0
1786-87					
1787-88					
66.	Aug.	1787	1 Bhadra	1194 A garden in Shibdanga	„ 6- 8- 0
67.	March	1788	3 Chaitra	„ A talook & trees	(Rent) ?
1788-89					
1789-90					
1790-91					
68.	May	1790	30 Baisakh	1197 A house in Bhatpara	Rs. 80- 0- 0
69.	Oct.	„	5 Kartick	„ Bramhattor land in Cossimbazar	„ 17- 6- 8
1791-92					
70.	May	1791	11 Jaistha	1198 A room in Haat Sripur	Rs. 45- 0- 0
71.	Nov.	„	15 Agrahayana	„ Settlement of a tank	„ 0-12- 0
72.	Feb.	1792	25 Magh	„ Settlement of a garden	(rent) 6- 8- 0
					(Rent) (Contd.)

*Sold to Lokenath on 22 Magh 1206 (Feb 1800)

MURSHIDABAD PROPERTIES (Contd.)

1773—1794

No.	Eng. Date	Date of the Deed	Item	Purchaser	Value
73. Feb.	1792	Magh	1198 A garden with trees	-do-	65-0-0
74. "	"	26 "	" A pucca house	-do-	53-0-0
1792-93					
75. April	1792	9 Baisakh	1199 Talook Purushottam in Kalikapur	Sri Krishnakantababu	401-0-0
76. July	"	10 Sraban	" 9 Cubits of land	Maharaja Lokenath	0-6-0
77. "	"	13 Sraban	" One room house in Chunakhali	-do-	(Rent)
78. Dec.	"	28 Agrahayana	" A house and land -do-	-do-	33-0-0
79. Jan.	1793	16 Magh	" 6 bighas land and tank in Kantanagar	-do-	180-0-0
80. Feb.	"	25 Magh	" Brahmatior land 6½ k.	-do-	160-0-0
81. March	"	6 Chaitra	" -do- 4 bighas 6½ k. in Kantanagar	-do-	25-1-12
82. April	"	30 Chaitra	" -do- 13. K.	-do-	22-0-0
1793-94					19-8-0
83. July	1793	29 Ashar	1200 An orchard in Jhaukhola	-do-	5-12-0
84. Dec.	"	3 Pous	" An orchard of 48 trees	-do-	(Rent)
			Kantababu died on 28/29 Pous 1200 B.S. (January 1794).		42-0-0
1794-95					
85. June	1794	25 Jaistha	1201 Land in Gobindabati	Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur	15-0-0
86. Nov.	"	25 Agrahayana	" Zamindari right	-do-	2-0-0
87. 19 Nov.	"	"	" Land bought in Sheriff's Sale	-do-	325-0-0
88. Feb.	1795	17 Falgoon	" Land exchanged for a tank	-do-	—
1795-96					
89. June	1795	19 Ashar	1202 A pucca double storied house	-do-	592-0-0
90. July	"	29 Ashar	" A patta for land	-do-	1-8-0
					(Rent)
					(Contd.)

1794—1804

MURSHIDABAD PROPERTIES (Contd.)

1794 — 1804

APPENDICES

No. Eng. Date	Date of the Deed	Item	Purchaser	Value
1796-97				
91. April	1796 5 Baisakh	1203 Patta for alluvial land	-do-	1- 0- 0 (Rent)
92. May	" 6 Jaistha	" Buys 9 Mouzas in Supreme Court Sale	-do-	—
93. 28 June	" Ashar	" Settlement of a Mouza from E. I. Company	-do-	500- 0- 0
94. Oct.	" 9 Kartick	" A pucca house in Chunakhali	-do-	90- 0- 0
95. Nov.	" 25 "	" 5 bighas of land in Jhaikhola	-do-	100- 0- 0
96. January	1797 15 Magh	" patta for an orchard	-do-	6- 0- 0 (rent)
1797-98				
97. 19 Sept.	1797 6 Aswin	1204 Bought in Auction Sale Hooda Par Gopjan	Raja Golaknath	18700-0- 0
98. Oct.	" Kartick	" Order Communicated of Revenue Sale of 7 Jan. 1795	Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur	708- 0- 0
99. January	1798 18 Magh	" Land 3 B 2 K. Bramhattor	-do-	25- 0- 0
100. Feb.	" 27 Magh	" Land 8 K. -do-	-do-	30- 0- 0
101. Feb.	" 28 Magh	" Wroughton-Baug sold by Nrisingha	-do-	10- 0- 0
102. March	" 2 Chaitra	" Bramhattor land	-do-	30- 0- 0
103. "	" 19 Chaitra	" Bamboo bushes & trees	-do-	6- 0- 0
1798-99				
104. April	1798 14 Baisakh	1205 Bramhattor land	-do-	14- 0- 0
105. 2 July	" 21 Ashar	" Revenue Sale, Mouza Lalitakunja	-do-	900- 0- 0
106. Oct.	" 30 Aswin	" Bramhattor land	-do-	24- 0- 0
107. January	1799 14 Magh	" Land I B. 6 K.	-do-	30- 0- 0
108. "	" 15 Magh	" A house and land	-do-	90- 0- 0
109. February	" 2 Falgoon	" Bramhattor land 24 bighas in Fatesingh	-do-	201- 0- 0
1799-1800				
110. 10 June	1799 30 Jaistha	1206 Revenue Sale Bipraghata Taluk	-do-	2- 0- 0 (Contd.)

MURSHIDABAD PROPERTIES (Contd.)

1794—1804

No.	Eng. Date	Date of the Deed	Item	Purchaser	Value
111.	24 July	1799	11 Sraban	-do-	Rs. 22675-0-0
112.	July	" 16	" -do- Hooda Raghunathpur etc. A house (the land is sold on 17 Jaistha 1208)	-do-	" 147-0-0
113.	Nov.	" 13	Agrahayana	-do-	" 14-2-10
114.	Dec.	" 5	Pous	-do-	" 61-14-8
115.	January	1800	13 Magh	-do-	" 150-0-0
1800-01					
116.	April	1800	1 Baisakh	Settlement of Taraf Kanaipara	" 4-13-0
117.	March	1801	23 Falgoon	" Pucca shoproom in Haat Stripur	" (rent)
118.	"	" 16	Chaitra	" Land in Taluk Taranagar	" 8-0-0
1801-02					" 61-0-0
119.	May	1801	17 Jaistha	Land sold in Kasimnagar	Rs. 17-0-0
120.	June	" 9	Ashar	Pucca house (First English deed)	" 53-0-0
121.	Feb.	1802	10 Falgoon	" Pucca house in Taraf Talagachhi	" 51-3-0
122.	March	" 9	Chaitra	" A bigha of land in Haat Stripur	" 43-0-0
123.	"	" 16	Chaitra	" A house in Cossimbazar	" 1501-0-0
1802-03					
124.	Dec.	1802	16 Pous	1209 Lakheraj land 14 Bighas 17 kattas	" 220-13-0
1803-04					
125.	June	1803	29 Jaistha	1210 Orchard and pucca house	" 453-0-0
126.	Aug.	" 20	Bhadra	" A pucca room in Haat Stripur	" 23-0-0
1804-05					
			1211		

Maharaja Lokenath died on 12 May 1804 (Baisakh 1211)
born on 4 April 1764 (23 Chaitra 1170)

B. NADIA PROPERTIES

1773—1804

No.	Eng. date	Date of the deed	Item	Purchaser	Value
1.	1787 11 Sept.	28 Bhadra	1194 Revenue Sale Dihi Meherpur and Rajpur (original missing, copies available)	Lokenath Nandy	Rs. 4,596-3-17½g
2.	1797 18 Aug.	5 Bhadra	1204 Revenue Sale. Dihi Hazipur etc.	Baisnabcharan Nandy	„ 9,371-12-7g
„	„ 1 Sept.	19 „	„ -do- Amalnama (original missing)	-do-	
3.	„ 1 Sept.	19 „	„ Revenue Sale. Dihi Mangalpara Sarbangapur etc.	Maharaja Lokenath	„ 13,700-0-0
4.	1799 Oct.	11 Aswin	1206 The above property of Bainsab-charan (No. 2) sold to	Maharaja Lokenath	„ 12,142-6-14g
5.	1801 July	32 Ashar	1208 Pargana Plassey	-do-	„ 20,555-0-0

APPENDICES

C. RAJSHAHI PROPERTIES

1773-1804

1.	1787 Sept.	13 Bhadra	1194 Mahal Tejpur acquired	-do-	„ 5,900-0-0
2.	1799 Sept.	22 Bhadra	1206 Pargana Amrool, dihi Brajapur & Bhagsundar acquired	-do-	„ 6,600-0-0
3.	1801 May and 1802 May	7 Jaistha 2 Jaistha	1208 } Dihi Kamargaon surrendered to the Zamindar by the Lessee 1209 }	-do-	

D. BURDWAN PROPERTIES

1773-1804

1.	1774 April	2 Baisakh	1181 Pargana Mahalandi	-do-	„ 607-0-0
2.	1798 14 July	1 Srahan	1205 (Beerhoom at the time of purchase) Revenue Sale 17½ Mouza of Chati Balliapur	-do-	„ 480-0-0
3.	1802 Oct.	6 Kartick	1209 A pucca house in Pargana Dhenya	„	„ 30-0-0

E. MALDA PROPERTIES

1773-1804

No.	Eng. Date	Date of the deed	Item	Purchaser	Value
1.	1774 May	10 Jaistha	1181 Mouza Dogachi	Radhaballabh Roy	201- 0- 0

F. FARIDPUR PROPERTIES

1773-1804

1.	1787 17 June	4 Sraban	1194 Jalalpur Mahal. Revenue Sale	Baisnabcharan Nandy	2,300- 0- 0
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G. RUNGPORE PROPERTIES

1773-1804

1.	1779 13 August	1 Sraban	1186 Dewani Sanad for Baharbund Bhitarbund and Gayabari	Lokenath Chowdhury	5,001- 0- 0 (Nazar)
1779	3 Sept.	20 Bhadra	Sanad signed by Warren Hastings	-do-	

H. CALCUTTA PROPERTIES

1773-1804

1.	1773 December	21 Agrahayana	1180 Chitpur House in Sutanati	Krisnakanta Babu	11,001- 0- 0
2.	1777 March	20 Falgoon	1183 Patta for a garden (243 U.C.Rd.)	-do-	
3.	1778 22 May	11 Jaistha	1185 A house with land in Simla	-do-	2,001- 0- 0
4.	1780 19 Oct.	6 Kartick	1187 6 B. 9 K. Ultadingi garden	-do-	1,001- 0- 0
5.	1801 April	18 Chaitra	1207 Several properties in Sheriff's Sale	Maharaja Lokenath	40,000- 0- 0

APPENDIX No. 2

CONNECTIONS WITH EUROPEANS AND FOREIGNERS

A.

Account Books

1176 (1769-70)	1	Aldersey, William	—Chief of Cossimbazar
1191 (1784-85)	2	Anderson, David	—Member, Board of Revenue
1195 (1788-89)	3	Arab, Said Hussain	—Arab free merchant
1199 (1792-93)	4	Addison, John	—of Murshidabad

B.

Account Books

1176 (1769-70)	Barwell, Richard	—2nd at Cossimbazar Factory
1180 (1773-74)		—Councillor
1180, 1195 (1788-89)	Becher, Richard or John (see note below)	
1199 (1792-93) 1208		

Richard Becher, Senior came out as a Writer in 1743; Left India in 1771; returned in 1781; died in November 1782. His two sons Richard (junior) and John came out with him as writers in 1781. Richard served at Cossimbazar and Commercially in Commercial Dept. in 1780s and 1790s. John went to Murshidabad, became paymaster and returned to Murshidabad a Judge in 1797.

1191 (1784-85)	3	Benn, John	— ?
1191, 1199	4	Beeby, Robert	—Judge at Nator.
1191, 1199, 1201	5	Barton, William	—Member, Board of Trade.
1191	6	Bayne, John	—Free merchant of Bayne and Colvin.
1194 (1787-88)	7	Bourdieu, Joseph	—Company Servant.
1195 (1788-89)			
1199 (1792-93)			
1195 (1788-89)	8	Brown, Thomas	—Resident at Cossimbazar.
1208 (1801-02)			
1195	9	Benzet, Claude	—Sub-Treasurer.
1195	10	Burgeess, Thomas	—Silk merchant
1199 (1792-93)	11	Bebb, John	—Company servant
1208 (1801-02)	12	Buller, John	—of Board of Revenue
1208	13	Budge ?	—of Madapur
1208	14	Beachcraft, Samuel	—Commercial Resident of Bauleah

C

1191 (1784-85)	1	Champman, Charles	—Company servant
-do-	2	Croftes, Charles	
1191	3	Charters, Samuel	
1191	4	Cator, Joseph or Robert	—a free merchant
1194 (1787-88)	5	Cheap, John	—Resident of Sonamukhy
1195 (1788-89)			
1196 (1789-90)			
1195	6	Cullen, William	—a free merchant
1195	7	Cockerell, Charles	—Company servant

1195	8	Crommelin, C. R.	—Resident, Radhanagore later of Cossimbazar
1199 (1792-93)	9	Crisp, Burrish	—Company servant

D

Account Books

1176 (1769-70)	1	Ducarel, Gerard	---Persian translator at the Durbar
1180 (1773-74)		Gustovus	
1191 (1784-85)	2	Dandridge, George	—Persian & Bengali translator, Rev. Dept.
1191 (1784-85)	3	D'Oyley, Sir John	—Resident at the Durbar
1191 (1784-85)	4	Droz, Simeon	—of the Committee of Revenue
1191, 1199	5	Dunkin, William	—Calcutta Barrister
1191, 1195 (1788-89)	6	Davies, J. K.	—Calcutta Barrister and then Advocate General
1194 (1787-88)	7	Donat (French)	—French Company servant
1195 (1788-89)	8	Dallas, George	—Company servant
1208 (1801-02)	9	Dunkin, James (written William)	—an Advocate

E

1191 (1784-85)	1	Evelyn	-- member, Board of Revenue
1208 (1801-02)	2	Ewer, Walter	—Sheriff of Calcutta
1208	3	Edmiston, James	—Commissary of Bazaars
1208 (1801-02)	4	Edmundstone, Neil B. or -do- William A.	—Secretary in Secret Dept. - -Member, Board of Trade

1190 (1773-74)	1	Fydell, John	—Assistant at Cossimbazar Factory
1191 (1784-85)			
1195 (1788-89)	2	Fenwick, Edward	—Chief at Murshidabad.
1194 (1787-88)			
1191 (1784-85)			
1195 (1788-89)	3	Foley, George	—Company servant.
1199, 1201, 1205			
1191	4	Fowke, Joseph or Francis	— -do-
1191	5	Feckins	
1191, 1195 (1788-89)	6	Fendell, John	—Assistant at Murshidabad
1199			
1194 (1787-88)	7	Fergusson, John	—free merchant and Company Servant
1194	8	Frushard	—A Swiss free merchant

G

1176 (1769-70)	1	Gruebar, Nicholas	—3rd at Cossimbazar factory
1201 (1794-95)			
1191 (1784-85)	2	Grant, Charles	—Company Servant
1194 (1787-88)			
1194 (1787-88)	3	Gregory, John	—free merchant
1194	4	Gowan, Captain George	—Company Servant
1199	5	Gilbert, Ambrose	
1208 (1801-02)	6	Graeme, Charles	—Register at Rajshahi

H

Account Books

1176 (1769-70)	1	Henchman, Thomas	—Assistant at Cossimbazar and trader.
1180 (1773-74)			
1194 (1787-88)			
1176 (1769-70)	2	Hancock	—Company's Surgeon & trader
1180 (1773-74)	3	Hastings, Warren	—Governor General
1191 (1784-85)			
1199 (1792-93)			
1191 (1784-85)	4	Hunt	
1201 (1794-95)	5	Haldane, Major Robert	
1208 (1801-02)	6	Hamilton, Sir Frederick	—Register at Hooghly
1208	7	Hatch, George	—Member, Board of Revenue
1208	8	Hyde, John	—Judge and Official, Supreme Court
1208	9	Hunter, Major J.	—of 19th N. I.
1208 (1801-02)	1	Imlack, Capt. Lt. H.	—of 14th N. I.
J			
1191 (1784-85)	1	Johnson, Richard	
1191 (1784-85)	2	Johnson, William	—Attorney of the Supreme Court.
K			
1180 (1773-74)	1	Khoja Khawak	—Armenian Merchant.
1191 (1784-85)	2	Khoja Sireen Abraham	—do-
1195 (1788-89)			
1194 (1787-88)	3	Khoja Phanoos Kalanthar—	-do-
1195 (1788-89)			
1194 (1787-88)	4	Khoja Gregor Ittafan	—do-
1195 (1788-89)	5	Khoja Agha Catchick Arkiel	—do-
1194 (1787-88)	6	Keighley, Charles	—Chief at Cossimbazar
1195 (1788-89)			
1208 (1801-02)	7	Kelator	—of Madapur ?
1191 (1784-85)	1	Larkins, William	—Company Servant
1194 (1787-88)			
1208 (1801-02)	2	Lumsden, J.	—Agent to the Gov. Genl. later Register of Sadar & Nizamat Dewani Adalats.
1199 (1792-93)	3	Lane, Thomas	—Chief of Cossimbazar in 1776.

M

1180 (1773-74)	1	Middleton, Samuel	—Resident at the Durbar and Chief at Cossimbazar
1191 (1784-85)	2	Mcpherson, John	—Councillor
1191	3	Macan, Trevor	—Custom's Master
1191	4	Metcalfe, Major Thomas	
1194 (1787-88)	5	Mee, Benjamin	—of Bengal Bank

1199 (1792-93)	6	Motte, Thomas	
1199	7	Maguire (?)	
1208 (1801-02)	8	Molony, Lambert	—Register at Dacca
1208 (1801-02)	9	Mouat, Capt. Charles	—Engineer.

P

1176 (1769-70)	1	Pitchet, Lewis	—Assistant at Cossimbazar Factory
1180 (1773-74)			
1176, 1180, 1199	2	Purling, Charles	
		Hutchison	—do-
1191 (1784-85)	3	Petrie, John	—Company Servant
1191	4	Pegson	
1194 (1787-88)	5	Perrau R.S. and Palling	—free merchants
1201 (1794-95)	6	Paxton	—do-
1208 (1801-02)	7	Patton, John or Robert	—of 5th N. I.

R

Account Books

1176 (1769-70)	1	Redfearn, William	—Assistant to the Durbar
1180 (1773-74)	2	Redman, Dr. David	—Surgeon at Cossimbazar Factory
1176, 1180	3	Rooke, William	—Assistant to the Durbar
1176	4	Russell, Claude	—Governor's Councillor
1180, 1191 (1784-85)	5	Rider, Jacob	—Company Servant
1194 (1787-88)			
1191	6	Raban, Thomas	—Attorney of the Supreme Court

S

1176 (1769-70)	1	Sadakat Jung Shahab (Lord Clive)'s Servant	
-do-	2	Sykes, Francis	—Resident to the Durbar
1191 (1784-85)	3	Stuart, Charles	—Councillor
1191 (1784-85)	4	Scott, Major	
1191 (1784-85)	5	Smith, R. O.	—Company servant
1194 (1787-88)			
1195 (1788-89)			
1199 (1792-93)			
1191 (1784-85)	6	Shore, John	—Member, Board of Revenue
1191 (1784-85)	7	Shakespeare, C	—Sub-Secretary to the Govt.
1199, 1201, 1208	8	Seton, Archibald	—Company Servant
1199	9	Spreake, Peter	—do-
1199	10	Sealy, Charles	—Barrister
1199 (1792-93)	11	Sutton, Captain	
1208 (1801-02)	12	Stuart, Mr. & Mrs. James	—Register of Sadar and Nizmat Diwani Adalats

T

1176 (1769-70)	1	Thackeray, William	—Company Servant
1180 (1773-74)	2	Tomlinson, Robert	—Assistant at Cossimbazar
1191 (1784-85)	3	Thompson, G. N.	—Secretary to Warren Hastings
1195 (1792-93)	4	Tolfrey, Stackhouse	—Barrister
1201 (1794-95)	5	Turner, Samuel	—Company Servant
1201	6	Taylor, James or John	—Barrister
	7	Trauton	—do-

U

1194 (1787-88)
1208 (1801-02)

Udny, George

—Chief of Maldah later, Member,
Supreme Council.

W

1191 (1784-85)
1191 (1784-85)
1195 (1788-89)
1208 (1801-02)

1 Wheler
2 Webber, W
3 Wroughton, William
4 White, John

—Councillor
—Secretary, Board of Revenue
—Company Servant
—Judge of Calcutta Court of
Appeal.

APPENDIX No. 3

This list has been collected from Serampore College Library where this has been preserved along with the works of Rev. William Carey. The account book probably belonged to some European family connected with the missionaries.

Year 1803 A.D.

Item	Quantity	Rate		
		Rs.	As.	P.
Chaul (rice)	One maund	1	12	0
Dail (pulses)	Do	3	12	0
Mustard oil	Do	3	4	0
Ghee (best quality)	Do	18	2	0
Salt	Do	2	8	0
Flour	Do	2	8	0
Meat	Do	10	0	0
Fish	Do	2	8	0
Makhan (butter)	Do	35	0	0
Molasses	Do	1	14	0
Dudh (milk)	Do	1	14	0
Aloo (Potato)	Do	2	0	0
Onion	Do	1	0	0
Brinjal	Do		15	0
Sugar	Do	5	0	0
Biscuit	One pound	0	2	0
Kalla (banana)	One hundred	0	4	0
Lao (gourd)	Do	1	9	0
Sandesh	Do	1	9	0
Eggs	Do	0	10	0
Chickens	Do	7	13	0

APPENDIX No. 4

A Short Note on the Fort of Bijaygarh and the Other Forts.

The fort of Bijaygarh belonged to the Chandela Rajput Rajas who were known as the Rajas of Bijaygarh and that was also the name given to the entire *pargana*. Bulwant Singh, the father of Chait Singh harassed and plundered the district in such a manner that in 1752 the Raja agreed to sell the Bijaygarh fort for Rs. 50,000. Bulwant Singh got the possession of the fort first and armed it with his own men. Once this was done pretexts for refusing to pay the money agreed for it were easily found. Bulwant Singh never paid anything for the fort.

The Puttechata or Pateeta fort situated at the foot of the Vindyan Hills, five miles from Chunar belonged to the Mohammedan zemindar of the *pargana* Bhugwat. The fort was surrounded and attacked from time to time by Bulwant Singh and was ultimately captured after a month of siege when the zemindar was treacherously killed by Bulwant Singh.

The fort of Agoree which stands on the lofty rocks above the Sone river was the old fortress of the Chandela Rajas of Burhur. Bulwant Singh captured it by force.

Bulwant Singh acquired five forts by force. They were Benaras (Shiwalaghat), Bijaygarh, Agoree, Luteefpur and Patteehata all of them in the present district of Mirzapur.

(See: W. Oldham, ed. Gazeepur District Memoir, 1870).

APPENDIX No. 5

**The Petition of Sheikh Rahmutollah
Vacqueel on the part of Lognaut Nundee, son of Kishen Kaunt
Nundee Appellant.**

By a Decree of the Sudder Dewanny Adaulet, Rs. 19,620 is due to my client from Rajah Goroornarrain Zamindar of Pachete. A long time ago an order was sent to the Mofusil Judge to enforce the decision and the Judge finding no other means of his liquidating the amount, than by the sale of his zamindarry, sent a notification of the lands to be sold to the Board of Revenue; but the exact quantity of land of Jumma not being specified in the notification, the Board sent directions to the Collector to depute an aumeen into the Mofusil which was done. I now understand that an order is about to be sent to the Judge, directing him to transmit the plan of a Kistbundy. It is well known to you Gentleman, that the aforesaid Zamindar executed a 3 years Kistbundy to my client for the amount of his debt, but did not pay the instalments. My client has been a long time distressed and at last thro' the Justice of the Huzzoor, has obtained his right but if another Kistbundy is admitted he will be ruined. What confidence can my constituent possibly have in the zamindar's Kistbundy, his only means of satisfying the debt is by the disposal of his zamindarry, which during the period limited for payment of the Kistbundy, he may either cause to be sold for arrears to the Company and purchase it again himself under a fictitious name, or fraudulently dispose of it in Hebbah, or make it over to some other person and then from whence is my constituents money to come.

The zamindar will never have the honesty to liquidate the Decree while he is able, you Gentlemen are masters of the country, be pleased to take this into your consideration and cause the amount of my Constituent's Decree to be paid him. On 25th April the zamindar aforesaid delivered in a Dherkaust accompanied with a kistbundy to the Judge and offered the Security of a respectable Banker. The Judge transmitted the same to the Gentlemen of the Board, be pleased to send for and inspect the papers. If a Kistbundy is admitted by the Huzzoor, my Constituent is obedient to their order, but requests that under a proper limitation a kistbundy may be made out guaranteed by a respectable Mahajahn

resident in Calcutta, that my Constituent may receive the instalments from him as they become due, and have nothing to do with the zamindar.

A true translation

18 July, 1795

Proceess

27 August No. 11

W. Baring
(Translator)

APPENDIX No. 6

A Book of Monthly Accounts 1195

During a recent search of the Cossimbazar Raj Records, the cash book of monthly accounts of the year 1195 or 1788-89 came to light. This is the only cash book found of its kind. It seems that the cash book got soaked in water so it was felt expedient to lay it out on the top of the higher racks to dry. There it was left, forgotten by all and now found. The general condition of the cash book is therefore reasonably good except for the water marks and black fungi on the cover.

The accounts are of Kantababu's household at Cossimbazar and arranged under the heading of the 12 months. At the beginning of each month there is the preamble that this monthly account is of Dewan Krisnakanta Babuji which is followed by the Bengali and the English year and the Bengali month.

This is a period when Kantababu had retired from the service of the Governor-General. His cotton cloth trade was flourishing in Calcutta and he is found to be staying in Calcutta most of the year. This cash book could be a summary of the monthly accounts of Cossimbazar which was sent to him regularly. The accounts were now well defined. The zemindaran accounts were completely separate from the household accounts. The elephants, a part of the stable and the carriages as well as the department of boats were now parts of the zemindaran cash book but when the boats were used by the household, its expenses were incurred and recorded in the cash book. A part of the stable expense was accounted for in the household but only the men not the animals. The regular income shown, was from Haat Sripur but the amount was very small. Money was advanced regularly from the zemindaran account.

Special attention was given to religious ceremonies. The name of the deity 'Laxminarayan' was written at the top of the page each month though the usual '*Sri Hari Saranang*' (let Hari be my refuge) was also regularly written. The deity was worshipped every day by a Brahmin who was helped by three other persons. Sometimes, particularly during the auspicious months, the Brahmin worshipper of Calcutta was sent to help the '*Pujari*'. The

expenses for the daily worship and the *Samajbati* were written under the heads of 'worship expenses' and 'Gods' house expenses'. These two along with the 'store expenses' covered both the religious and secular requirements of the household. Special worship to the deity was offered at *Jhulanjatra* in Bhadra and *Doljatra* in Chaitra. A *Mahotsab* was held in Pous. The pattern of religious worship over the years is worth noting. The 'Salutation fees' sent to the Brahmin-Pundits of the different localities is found to be rationalised in comparison with the previous years. The salutation fees were now sent twice in the year, in the month of Baisakh and on the occasion of the *Dasahara* in Aswin. The latter list was longer and the fees were larger, establishing the *Dasahara* (Dussera) as the more important of the two functions. This year '*Pranami*' was sent in the month of Sraban also to celebrate a special event, which was the birth of a son to Baisnabcharan. Presumably this would be Golaknath, who unknowingly became the cause of the first family feud, was later adopted by Maharaja Lokenath and then expired in 1798.

It is interesting to note that except *Saraswati Puja* which was performed by Kantababu regularly from his young age, no other occasional Puja was performed in the house. In the year under consideration, taking advantage of Kantababu's long absence, the ladies initiated the Kartick Puja to please the bachelor god, so that he would bless Lokenath, who was yet childless. Lokenath in this book of accounts is systematically called 'Rajaji', thus domesticating the honour yet maintaining its singularity. 'Rajaji' was doing his bit to beget a progeny, by the way of strict religious behaviour. He might also be doing this to purify himself for receiving 'the word of God' (*Diksha*) from the family *Guru* in the month of Pous. So in the earlier months he is found visiting the temples of Mohan Raiji Thakur and Krisna Raiji Thakur both in Saidabad and taking food with Rashikananda Thakur of Saidabad. In Kartick, Rajaji takes '*Prasad*' at the house of Banku Behari Goswami of Bipraghata, paying Rs. 2 as salutation fees. Similarly in Pous he went to the house of Nanda Kumar Thakur at Khagra and paid the same amount of fees. This was repeated on 12 Pous when he went to the house of Krisnananda Thakur at Tantipara, had his food and paid the fees. This was of course not all. He was present at the several *Bhagabat Paths* (reading from the sacred book of Krisna) in the house and the *Mahotsaba* organised at the *Akhra* (club ?) of Haridas Babaji in Khagra. He took *Diksha* from the family *Guru* Nrisinghananda Thakur at Cossimbazar on 28 Pous with his elder wife (which shows that he was already married

twice). This was obviously the occasion of the *Mahotsab* reported earlier which was extended to Srikhanda in Burdwan, the usual residence of the family of the *Gurus*. Lokenath was 23 years old at the time.

Kantababu's well organised household makes itself felt through the pages of the accounts. He was during the year at Calcutta with his younger brothers Nrisingha and Gorachand alias Gokulchandra. There he fell ill. Special worship of the family deity was performed for his recovery. *Namsankirtan* was also done for the purpose. Kantababu's wife systematically called in the cash book '*Bara Sarkar*' went to Calcutta by boat in Aghran taking warm clothings, blankets and few of the servants with her. Two maid servants namely Kajri Dasi and Saibya's mother were later sent to her in Pous. As Kantababu could not come to perform the annual *Ekoddista Sradh* ceremony of his father, Gorachand returned to perform it on 30th Aghran, as according to the Bengali custom, if the eldest son cannot perform the ceremony, it is the youngest son who is then entitled to offer the annual veneration and the customary gifts to the departed father. In spite of the illness of the head of the family Lokenath's *Diksha* was not delayed even by a day and the household went on functioning as usual. Baisnabcharan however was too close to his uncle to perform the '*Annaprasan*' (first rice) ceremony of his son in his absence. This was presumably deferred.

Mejohabu (second brother) Joyram who was 'deficient in intellect', was however not perturbed by all this. He went to see the Muslim festival of boats called 'Bera' in Bhadra and then went to worship Kiriteswari by cart in Pous. His son Gurucharan was married in Falgoon.

Kantababu however fully recovered and returned with his wife and the servants in the month of Chaitra in the Rangalal boat.

As was then the general custom in a Bengali Hindu family, Kantababu did not like that the brides of his house to go⁷ back to their father's house even temporarily. This custom was generally followed in the family for the next 150 years, but he himself made an exception. Moved by the entreaties of one of the wives of Lokenath (presumably the elder) he bought Lokenath's father-in-law a house in Khagra, where the family came to live. It was thus easier for them to come and see their daughter as often as they desired. Now this Khuru Pal died in Aghran. His *Sradh* ceremony was performed in their native village of Gobardhanpur in Burdwan.

Ramnarayan, the brother-in-law of Lokenath was sent '*Ghat-badlani*' clothes (new clothes worn after the cremation ceremony and bathing in the Ganges). Later everyone in the house was given new clothes as the occasion demanded. This list makes no mention of Joyram's wife who was probably dead. Joyram however topped the list as Madhyam Babu. *Nao Sarkar* was Krisnachandra's widow and *Chhota Sarkar* was Baishnab Charan's wife. Nrisingha had in the meantime started a separate existence having shifted his family to another house. His wife was known as Baisnab's mother. Clothes were given to Baisnab, his wife, Gorachand and young Gobindacharan.

Another interesting social phenomenon is revealed in the cash book. All the daughters of the house with their husbands were living in the house. Thus it is found that both the sons-in-law of Kantababu, along with the sons-in-law of the other brothers were permanent guests in the house. Even if some of them from time to time went to their native villages, they were never accompanied by their wives. Their children were born in the house and were brought up together with the other children. This of course led to disaster, and it was left to young Harinath, 32 years later, to clear the house of impostors. His work however, was made easier by the many deaths in the family between 1798-1800. In 1787-88 there were at least 5 or 6 sons-in-law in the house, led by Brindabancharan Pal, the husband of Jamunamani and the father of Brajananda, much of whom will be heard of after 1804. There were at least two sons-in-law bearing the same name of Ramlochan, one was called *Chhoto* (small). Prasad Babu was the oldest in age and Gadadhar Nandy was probably the husband of Gangamani, Kantababu's youngest daughter and the father of Bangshidhar, who is another important actor of the post 1804 period. *Dolai* was presented to all the *Jamais* (sons-in-law) in Aghran for which *Khasa* and *Duria* cloths were purchased as winter was approaching.

The total expenses of the household was on an average Rs. 2,000 per month. The expenses could be very roughly divided as Rs. 500 for religious and Rs. 1,500 for secular purposes. The actual expense month by month is given below:

Baisakh	—	Rs. 1460- 4-5g
Jaistha	—	„ 1564-11-5,,
Ashar	—	„ 1856- 6-7½,,
Sraban	---	„ 1917- 9-5,,

Bhadra	—	„	1800- 4- 0g
Aswin	—	„	2636- 7- 5,,
Kartick	—	„	1460-11-15,,
Aghran	—	„	1821-11- 0,,
Pous	—	„	1948- 4- 5,,
Magh	—	„	1876- 8-10,,
Falgun	—	„	1880-11-11,,
Chaitra	—	„	2429- 0- 0,,

The regular expenses allotted were on an average roughly as follows: *Iswar Seva*—Rs. 50, *Iswarbat*—Rs. 100, Pronami and other expenses Rs. 150, Stable—Rs. 100, Cowhouse—Rs. 120, Gardens—Rs. 100 and the Bhandarkhana (store)—Rs. 600. Nine gardens were still supplying the family's requirement of fruit and vegetables. They were called by the name of the place they were situated in or by the name of its previous owner. Thus the gardens were at Jhaukhola, Shibdanga, Sannayasidanaga, Chunakhali, Hatibandah, Bansi Bagh and Khagra. The other two were known as Hatu Saha's and Wroughton Saheb's gardens.

The food in the household was entirely vegetarian with rice and milk forming the most important items of food. Over years of practice and contact with Calcutta the variety had certainly extended. Thus both in the Pous Mahotsab and during the Doljatra in Chaitra (which is popularly known as holi) the deity was offered besides the usual items *Supari* (areca nut), *Haridra* (turmeric), *Labanga* (clove), *Jeera*, (cummine seed), *Elachi* (Cardamom), *Keshar* (saffron), *Karpur* (camphor) *Jaiphal* (nutmeg), *Aguru* (black sandal or aloe wood) *Mombati* (candles) and *Dhoop* (incense from pine resin). At the Holi festival, only *Abir* (coloured dust) was bought. The variety of sweets attained much sophistication. Even the items that were used daily for 'Prasad' were large enough to open a sweet-shop.

The daily variety
of sweets

Monda
Peda
Barfi
Jilapi
Batasha and Kadma
Panitoo

Special sweets for
Mahotsab

Monda
Chinir Ukhra
Elachidana
Jilapi
Monohara
Barfi

Khair Gunjia
Mitai

Peda
Rashkara
Bundia
Matichurer Laddoo

The rates of materials for the Mahotsab are quoted:

Rice (Parboiled)	13 mds and 19 seers	cost	Rs.	41- 4- 5g
Rice (Atap)	8 „ „ 31 „	„	„	16-14-15,,
Arhar (Pulse)	8 „ „ 2 „ 1 Poa	„	„	12-14- 5,,
Salt	39 „ 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ Chhataks	„	„	5- 3-10,,
Ghee (Clarified butter)	1 „ „ 1 „ 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ „	„	„	14 -9-15,,
Pease (Pulse)	1 „ 1 Poa	„	„	0- 0-10,,
Sugar	1 „ „ 3 „	„	„	12- 0- 6,,
Flour	2 „ „ 38 „ 1 Poa	„	„	7- 5- 3,,
Mustard oil	1 „ „ 32 „ 1 Chhatak	„	„	11-13- 5,,

The society was closely knit and the relations with the Gujarati merchants were intimate. The Gujarati merchants sent a large gift of various types of silk cloth on the occasion of the marriage of Gurucharan. Lokenath paid Rs. 5 as social veneration on the marriage of the son of Balgovind Das Babu Gujarati, Rs. 2 was paid by Gurucharan on the occasion. On 20 Falgoon Balgovind Das Babu organised a dance (*nautch*) to celebrate the marriage. Lokenath attended, paying Rs. 15 as *pela* (satisfaction fees).

On 15th Falgoon a group of *Bairagis* and *Babajis* are paid Re. 1 each, as was the custom of the time. They might have come on hearing of the marriage ceremony.

The salaries resemble the other years and comparison will prove that many old hands continued, though subtle change in the composition is discernible. The total number of people were increasing while several departments like those of the elephants, the coaches and the boats were put under the zemindaran account. Some names are however common in two accounts. It is presumed that they were paid from both the accounts.. Most of the old servants of Kantababu were now dead.

Expenses of the staff given per month with the description of job.

1. Debnath Roy, Munshi — Rs. 15-0-0 p.m.

2. Radhamohab Ghosh, Munshi	—	Rs. 15-0-0	p.1
3. Sridhar Kabiraj (Physician)	—	Rs. 8-0-0	„
4. Ramnarayan Kabiraj (Do.)	—	„ 8-0-0	„
5. Ramani Kabiraj (Do.)	—	„ 12-0-0	„
6. Sebakram Vidyalkar Jyotiskar (Astrologer)	„	10-0-0	„
7. Paramananda Roy, Pundit	—	„ 5-0-0	„
8. Sheik Muzaffar Ali	—	„ 65-0-0-	„
9. Muhammad Rafique Ahmed	—	„ 10-0-0	„
10. Sheik Panchu Rauf	—	„ 6-0-0	„
11. Chhabin Das Babu	—	„ 20-0-0	„
12. Nandalal Chakrabarti	—	„ 10-0-0	„
13. Kashinath Nath (Senior Accountant)	—	„ 8-0-0	„
14. Swarup Mukherji	—	„ 4-8-0	„
15. Bidur Pore	—	„ 6-0-0	„
16. Ramlochan Barujjya	—	„ 5-0-0	„
17. Narayan Chaudhuri	—	„ 3-8-0	„

The Khansamas

18. Siboo Khansama	—	„ 3-0-0	„
19. Balai Do.	—	„ 3-0-0	„
20. Kitti Napit Do.	—	„ 2-8-0	„
21. Khoshan Bhandari Do.	—	„ 2-8-0	„
22. Narayan Napit Do.	—	„ 1-0-0	„
23. Gokul Dhoba (washerman)	—	„ 5-0-0	„
24. Nabai Dhoba Do	—	„ 1-0-0	„
25-27. 3 Goalas for carrying water @ Rs. 3	—	„ 9-0-0	„
28. Another Ghosh	—	„ 5-0-0	„

Servants of Kartamahasaya (Kantababu)

29. Jagannath Khansama	—	„ 3-0-0	„
30. Ganesh Khidmatgar	—	„ 3-0-0	„
31. Ananda Bhandari	—	„ 2-0-0	„
32. Kalicharan Khidmatgar	—	„ 2-0-0	„

Servants of Madhyambabu (Jyram)

33. Jagannath Khidmatgar	—	Rs. 2-12-0	„
34. Dhaniram Khidmatgar	—	„ 2-12-0	„

Servants of the Raja (Lokenath)

35. Golap Khidmatgar	—	Rs.	3-0-0	p.m.
36. Lochan Napit Khidmatgar	—	„	3-0-0	„
37. Bande Ali Bardar	—	„	3-0-0	„
38. Ramkrisna Khidmatgar	—	„	3-0-0	„
39. Boolaki Khidmatgar	—	„	2-0-0	„
40. Mohini Modak	—	„	1-0-0	„

Servants of the sons-in-law

41. Nitai Khidmatgar	—	„	2-0-0	„
42. Paban Ghosh Khidmatgar	—	„	3-0-0	„

Kashibabu's servant

43. Madan Khidmatgar	—	„	3-0-0	„
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Servants of the younger boys of the house

44. Ranga Khidmatgar	—	„	3-0-0	„
45. Jio Khidmatgar	—	„	3-0-0	„
46. Gopaldhan Khidmatgar	—	„	3-0-0	„

Servants of the Bird House (Chiriakhana)

47. Chandu, Mania birds' chakar	—	„	3-0-0	„
48. Phanicharan Do.	—	„	3-0-0	„
49. Ramji, Pigeons' chakar	—	„	3-0-0	„

Mashalchis (Light Department)

50. Padoo Mashalchi	—	„	3-0-0	„
51. Khoshan Bhagbat Mashalchi	—	„	3-0-0	„
52. Choto (junior) Khoshan Mashalchi	—	„	3-0-0	„
53. Deba Mashalchi	—	„	3-0-0	„

Mending House etc.

54. Moushim of the mending house	—	„	3-0-0	
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55. Hato, the clock winder (Gharian)	—	Rs. 12-0-0	p.m.
56-60. Kanta Kahar head of the group of 5 @ Rs. 3	—	„ 15-0-0	„

Peadas

61. Meer Zaman Jamadar (Headman)	—	„ 3-8-0	„
62. Badi Roy	—	„ 3-8-0	„
63. Prichha Roy	—	„ 3-0-0	„
64. Bhowani Singh	—	„ 3-0-0	„
65. Roshan	—	„ 3-0-0	„
66. Meer Bux	—	„ 3-0-0	„
67. Chandu Khan	—	„ 3-0-0	„
68. Hingan	—	„ 3-0-0	„
69. Khayrulla	—	„ 3-0-0	„
70. Kalloo Khan	—	„ 3-0-0	„
71. Gour Mohan (Harkara)	—	„ 3-0-0	„
72-74. Three Paiks @ Rs. 3	—	„ 9-0-0	„

Gate-men

75. Manick Roy (entrance to the female quarters)	—	„ 3-8-0	„
76. Rajnath Misra Do.	—	„ 3-8-0	„
77. Tehoo Main Do.	—	„ 3-0-0	„
78. Guru Prasad Pandey (on 1st floor)	—	„ 3-0-0	„

Sanitation

79-80. Manick and Baburam Hazra @ Rs. 2-8-0	„	5-0-0	„
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Stable

81. Bodhan Sais	—	3-8-0	„
82. Golam Yusul Sais	—	3-8-0	„
83. Bodhan (Chhota) Sais	—	3-8-0	„
84. Misraji Sais	—	3-8-0	„
85. Tela Sais	—	3-0-0	„
86. Fate Mahammad	—	1-8-0	„
87. Panchu Kochwan (coachman)	—	5-0-0	„

Cow house

88-91. Gabu Ghosh and his mates (4) @ Rs. 4 — Rs. 16-0-0 p.m.

Thakurbari (The deity)

92. Shyam Thakur, Pujari	—	„	3-8-0	„
93. Shambhu Thakur, Pujari (of Calcutta)	—	„	3-0-0	„
94. Paramananda Thakur (Tulsi leaf plucker)	—	„	3-0-0	„
95. Ramnidhi Ghosh (Tahlia)	—	„	3-0-0	„
96. Bhikhari Malakar (Flower picker and garland maker)	—	„	1-0-0	„

Maidservants

97. Kajri Dasi	—	„	1-0-0	„
98. Saibya's mother	—	„	1-0-0	„
99. Mokshoda Dasi	—	„	1-0-0	„
100. Pabitra Dasi	—	„	1-0-0	„
101. Moni Dasi	—	„	0-8-0	„
102. Peshagi Dasi	—	„	0-8-0	„
103. Kalindi Dasi	—	„	0-8-0	„

The total establishment comes to Rs. 461-0-0 per month.

Apart from the servants various types of working men were closely connected with the household, many of them were of course associated for years. The new grocer Nrisingha Modi seems to be supplying the provisions required for the house regularly and in large quantities. The running account with him turns out to be dealing with large sums of money. Baburam Modi, the old grocer was possibly on the decline. Nrisingha supplied everything Atta (wheat), sugar, tobacco, mustard oil, pulses of various kinds, boiled rice, even herbs, dressings and spices. So in the list of the names of people connected with the household, he should have his name at the top.

1. Nrisingha Modi (grocer)
2. Baburam Modi (grocer)
3. Loharam Rakshit Modi (grocer)
4. Dhananjay Chanda (goldsmith)
5. Karimuddin Darji (tailor)

6. Buchchan Darji (tailor)
7. Khosan Kamar (ironmonger)
8. Bhikhari Kamar (ironmonger)
9. Gobardhan Tabaldar (wood chopper)
10. Rabulla Chaudhuri (supplier of wood for cooking)
11. Radhamohan Mistri (all purpose handy man)
12. Chhaghan Mistri (all purpose handy man)
13. Gopi Pashari (general merchant)
14. Paban Pal Kumar (potter)
15. Balai Chunari (lime supplier)
16. Sultan Tamakoo-oala (tobacco supplier)
17. Loharam Kalu (oil supplier)
18. Radha Ghosh Goala (milk supplier)
19. Chamroo Hal Bhai (sweetmeat maker)
20. Panchanan Dadhi (curd supplier)
21. Mansukh Sardar (?)
22. Dhunai Mahoori (the peon of the court)

A new Mayurpankhi boat was being built in Cossimbazar throughout the months of Pous, Magh and Falgoon under the supervision of Gossain Das Manji. It was not quite ready in Chaitra, though no expenses for the building of it has been entered in the cash book during the month. Presumably money that had been already advanced was being utilised.

Before closing the discussion on the cash book mention should be made of the custom of *Bhratri Dwitiya* or the brother's day as revealed in the accounts. Now sisters not only present them with clothings and sweets but also give them spices, betel leaves and areca nuts after touching their foreheads with sandal paste and liquid calcinated gum resin (*ফুয়া*). This is followed by sumptuously feeding the brothers. According to the cash book the ceremony was performed in a most simple way. The head of the family sent a couple of dhotis and uranis each to all the brothers of the daughters-in-law of the house and the matter ended there without any further ado. It is not easy to suggest whether this was the custom in Kantababu's family only. But as most of the Bengali customs including the great Durga Puja have grown with the British administration in the country, it will be safe to presume that by its simplicity the new custom of *Bhratri Dwitiya* could establish itself so easily in the social system.

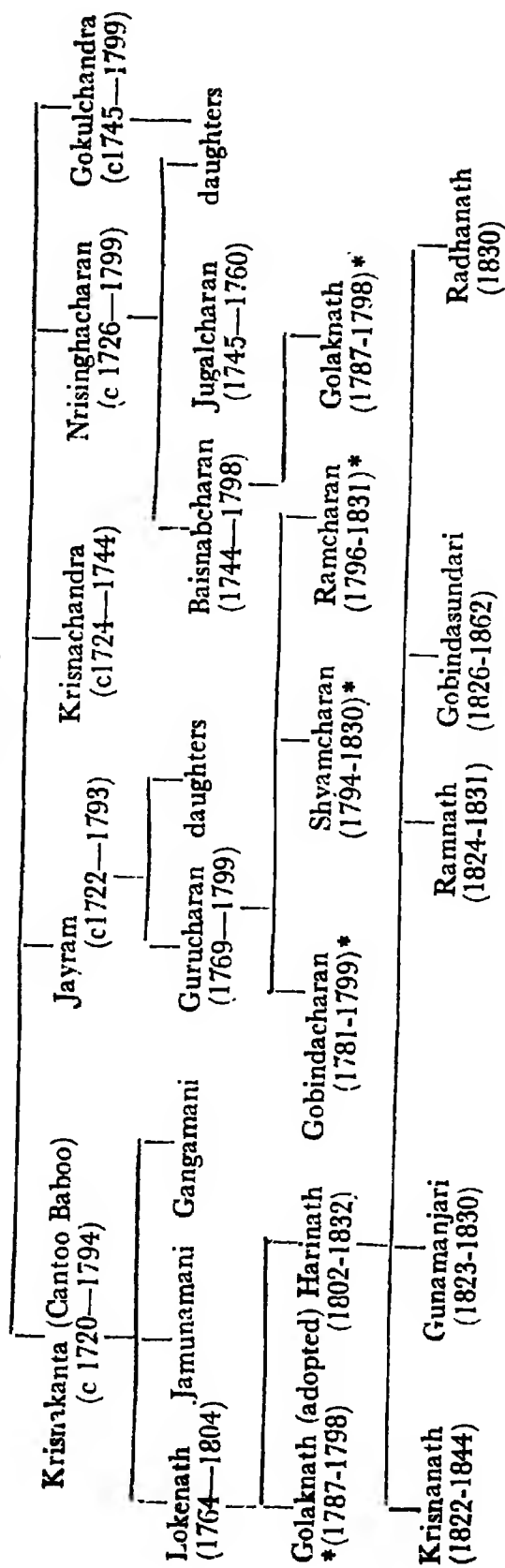
In conclusion it may therefore be said, that the account book presents a picture of the time which is both real and authentic. Further analysis will reveal more details. As presented, Kantababu's household expenses show a modest trend of mind. In spite of the accumulation of wealth, no extravagance was allowed in the family. A comfortable living was the general tendency but over spending was carefully controlled. The accounts prove a well knit family, a very organised behaviour and complete control of the household finances by the master of the house, even when he was extremely ill in Calcutta. Truly this account book like the others already discussed is a mine of information.

APPENDIX No. 7

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE

Radhakrisna

(c 1770—1754)



* Some dates of Golakanath's generation corrected by later evidence.

APPENDIX No. 8

Chief Factors of Cossimbazar and Residents at Murshidabad.

<i>Year :</i>	<i>Factor :</i>	<i>Assistant :</i>
1640	The factory was probably established	
1654	Stephens (died in Cossimbazar)	
1658	John Kean	Job Charnok
1680	Job Charnok	Robert Hedges
1683	Robert Hedges (officiating)	
1686	Job Charnok's flight by night	
1701	Nathaniel Halsey	
1707	William Bugden	Chambers
1711	Robert Hedges	
1715	Samuel Feak	John Dean
1716	William Ange	
1720	John Dean	
1723	Henry Frankland	
1727	Edward Stephenson	
1730	John Stackhouse	
1733	Hugh Burker	
1736	Thomas Braddyll	John Halsey
1740	Richard Eyre	Charles Adams
1741	Francis Russell	-do-
1743	John Forester	
1744	John Halsey	
1744	John Forester	
1746	Wadham Brooke	
1749	Edward Eyles	
1751	William Fytche	
1752	William Watts	Mathew Collet
1757	Warren Hastings (officiating)	Francis Sykes
1759	Warren Hastings	-do-

After Plassey

<i>Year :</i>	<i>Chief :</i>	<i>Resident :</i>
1757	Warren Hastings	Luke Scrafton

<i>Year :</i>	<i>Factor :</i>	<i>Assistant :</i>
1759	Warren Hastings	Warren Hastings
1763	Stanley Batson	-do-
1765	A. W. Senior	Francis Sykes
1765(22 July)	Francis Sykes	-do-
1769	William Aldersey	Richard Barwell
1770	Robert Palk (officiating)	Richard Becher
1771	Samuel Middleton	Samuel Middleton
1774(31 Oct.)	J. Rider (officiating)	
1774(9 Dec.)	William Aldersey	Charles Goring
1776(1 Mar.)	Thomas Lane	
„	William Bym Martin	
1779	Robert Palk	
1783	Simeon Droz	
1787	J.I. Keighly	John D'Oyley (1785)
1787	The chiefship was abolished with Keighly. The office is now called Resident.	
1787	Thomas Harris	
1788	Thomas Brown (officiating)	
1789	C. R. Crommelin (died in office)	
1789	Thomas Brown	

(The list is not complete)

APPENDIX No. 9

**Approximate Years of Birth of Some Important
Personalities of the 18th Century of Bengal.**

1. Raja Dayaram Roy (Dighapatia)	.. 1690
2. Maharaja Nandakumar (Kunjaghata)	.. 1700
3. Muhammad Reja Khan	.. 1707
4. Maharaja Nabakrisna (Sovabazar)	.. 1712
5. Gangagovinda Sinha (Kandi)	.. 1714
6. Gocul Chandra Ghoshal (Bhukailash)	.. 1718
7. Krisna Kanta Nandy (Cossimbazar)	.. 1720
8. Rani Bhawani (Nator)	.. 1725
9. Nrisingha Nandy	.. 1726
10. Luft-un-nissa Begum (Zeria of Siraj)	.. 1728
11. Warren Hastings	.. 1733
12. Nawab Siraj-ud-Dowlah	.. 1733
13. Umdat-un-nissa Begum (wife of Siraj)	.. 1734
14. Santiram Singh (son of G. G. Sinha)	.. 1734
15. Baisnab Charan Nandy (son of Narsing)	.. 1744
16. Ummat Saira Begum (alleged daughter of Siraj and his zeria)	1749
17. Lokenath Nandy (son of Cantoo Baboo)	.. 1764
18. Maharaja Girischandra (Nadia)	.. 1789

APPENDIX No. 10

Years of Death of some Important Personalities of 18th Century Bengal.

1. Nawab Siraj-ud-Dowla	July	1757
2. Raja Rajballav (Dacca)	Sept.	1763
3. Raja Ramnarain (Patna)	Sept.	1763
4. Jagatseth Mahatapchand	Oct.	1763
5. Maharaja Swarupchand	Oct.	1763
6. Nawab Mirjafar	March	1765
7. Nawab Najim-ud-Dowla	May	1766
8. Ummat Saira Begum (alleged daughter of Siraj)	Feb.	1774
9. Maharaja Nandakumar	Aug.	1775
10. Col. George Monson	Sept.	1776
11. General John Clavering	June	1777
12. Nawab Mirkasim	June	1777
13. Santiram Singh		1778
14. Gocul Ghoshal		1784
15. Maharaja Krisnachandra (Nadia)		1789
16. Lutf-un-nissa Begum	Oct.	1790
17. Umdat-un-nissa Begum	Nov.	1793
18. Maharaja Doorlabhram (Rai Durlabh)	Dec.	1793
19. Krisna Kanta Nandy	Jan.	1794
20. Maharaja Nabakrisna Deb Bahadur	Feb.	1798
21. Baisnab Charan Nandy	Aug.	1798
22. Nrisingha Nandy	Aug.	1799
23. Maharaja Ramkrisna Roy (Nator)	May	1802
24. Maharani Bhawani (Nator)	Sept.	1802
25. Maharaja Iswar Chandra Roy (Nadia)	March	1803
26. Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur (Cossimbazar)	May	1804
27. Maharaja Devy Singh (Nashipur)	April	1805
28. Mohabut (Mohabul) Ali Khan (youngest brother of Nawab Siraj)		1809
29. Babboo Begum (wife of Nawab Mirjafar)	Dec.	1809
30. Munny Begum(-do-)	Jan.	1813

APPENDIX No. 11

Subahdars of Bengal

1659	— Prince Shah Shuja
1660—64	— Mir Jumla
1664—67	— Shaista Khan
1667—79	— Bahadur Khan Ibrahim Khan
1679—89	— Shaista Khan
1689—98	— Bahadur Khan
1698—00	— Prince Azim-ush-Shan
1700—07	— Murshid Quli Khan
1707—10	— Zia-ullah Khan (murdered)
1710—27	— Murshid Quli Khan
1727—39	— Sujauddin Khan
1739—40	— Sarfaraz Khan (killed in battle)
1740—56	— Alibardi Khan
1756	— Shaukat Jung (-do-)
1756—57	— Siraj-ud-Dowlah (murdered)
1757—60	— Mirjafar Ali Khan (deposed)
1760—63	— Mir Kasim Ali Khan (deposed)
1763—65	— Mirjafar Ali Khan
1765	— East India Company received the Dewani of the Bengal Subha

MUNNY BEGUM IN THE LETTERS OF WARREN HASTINGS

Munny Begum who succeeded in becoming a wife to Nawab Mir Jafar Ali Khan, Mahabatjung, the Nawab of the Bengal Suba from 1757 to 1760 and again from 1763 to 1765, is a much maligned character. The object of this article is to set before the discerning readers, her character as revealed in the various letters of Hastings which will certainly be an addition to our knowledge.

It is not known who she was in early life or where she came from. She was a *nautch* girl of some beauty, who caught the eye of Mir Jafar and came into prominence in 1760, when the old Begum Bibi Shah Khanum refused to accompany the Nawab to Calcutta when he was deposed from his Subadarship. It is in Calcutta, particularly during the negotiations of being appointed Nawab the second time, Munny Begum came not only to prominence but was also recognised as the Nawab's wife. Her devotion to the Nawab in spite of his three other marriages and his habit of collecting women, indulging in licentiousness and taking strong intoxicants, remained constant. Several Englishmen who were the friends of the members of the Majority in the Council, who constituted a strong force against Warren Hastings, complained that she had reduced the Palace of the Nawab to a house of pleasure. There is however little strength in these assertions. Most of the Subadars of Bengal had a life style steeped in wine and women, in fact this was considered to be the normal behaviour. Be that as it may, a reference to Munny Begum is to be found in the Calendar of Persian Records preserved at the National Archives, New Delhi. This is a letter from Bibi Shah Khanum, the first wife of Mir Jafar and the mother of the deceased Miran (Sadiq Ali Khan) and the wife of Mir Kasim. She deeply distrusted Munny Begum and felt that by pushing the claim of the minor Najemadoulah to succeed Mir Jafar she was deliberately flouting the claim of Miran's children. So she wrote a letter to Lord Clive on 18 May, 1765 expressing her joy on his return as the Governor of Bengal. She informs him about the two sons of Miran known as Mir Saidu and Mir Supan and also of the two daughters, the elder of whom she wanted to marry to Sultan Daud Mirza. She reminded him that she had called him her son, so he had a duty towards

the safeguarding his nephews and nieces who were under constant danger from the new Nawab and his family. There is however no direct allegations against Munny Begum.

Munny Begum had to use all her influence on the dying Nawab in order to make him declare her son Najemadoulah or Najeem-ud-dowlah as his successor,* in preference to the two elder sons of Babboo Begum another wife of Nawab Mirjafar and the sons of Miran. Clive however did not disturb the arrangement arrived at before his arrival. He was however more interested in getting the Dewanee of the Bengal Suba from the Badshah of Delhi and it mattered little who was being recognised as the Subadar. Munny Begum however reached an understanding with Babboo Begum, her co-wife by requesting the Company to grant her two sons pensions of Rs. 85,000 to Syfudoulah and Rs. 60,000 to Mobarakudoulah per year. This arrangement stood her in good stead when her son Najemadoulah died a year later in 1766 and Syfudoulah became Nawab. She retained her position as the head of the *Dehorees* or Female Establishments of the Nizamat and continued to do so till her death.

It is difficult to find the age of Munny Begum. If it is presumed that she was about 20 years of age in 1760, her date of birth can then be placed around 1740. This seems to be quite reasonable as she is found to be fully occupied in a conspiracy to support the claim of the son of a concubine of Nawab Mobarakudoulah in place of Babar Jung, his legitimate eldest son. She failed miserably in her endeavour. This was in 1809, when she is presumed to be 69 years of age. If these calculations are correct then Nawab Najemadoulah was a boy when he succeeded and those paintings which are found in the Palace of the Nawab at Murshidabad showing him as a moustachioed youth are totally fake. Najemadoulah perhaps never reached his teens. Having established her period of existence, it is time to examine her character from the letters of Warren Hastings.

The first important communication was made when Hastings wrote to the Court of Directors in London recommending her to be the guardian of the minor Nawab on 1 September 1772. 'The appointment of Munny Begum... was unanimously approved,.....it is a measure of general

*Najeem-ud-dowlah became Nawab succeeding Nawab Mirjafar on 1st March, 1765 and expired on 8th May, 1766.

satisfaction.' 'The Begum as a woman is incapable of passing the bounds assigned her. Her ambition cannot aspire to higher dignity', as would be in the case of the only other candidate Mir Jaffer's brother. 'She has no children to provide for or mislead her fidelity. Her actual authority rests on the Nawab's life, and therefore cannot endanger it. It must cease with his minority, when she must depend absolutely on the Company for support against her ward and pupil who will then become her master.' ... 'I have pleasure to add that in the exercise of her office she has already shown herself amply qualified for it by her discernment, economy and patient attention to affairs.'¹ It is clear from the extract that Hastings knew almost nothing about her but was impressed by the discipline of her work. But when he was writing to Middleton about a year later on 9 July 1773, he had developed a respect for the opinions of the Begum which is reflected in the letter when Gurudas, the son of Nandakumar was appointed Naib-Dewan to the Nawab. 'I know the Begum's objections to Goordas. They arise from the villainies of his father and I am sorry to say are but too well founded....The young man himself happily is without one of his father's bad qualities, is gentle, well tempered and free from every species of artifices. Left to himself there is no danger of his doing ill.'²

In spite of the Begum's distrust, Nandakumar wanted his son to have the appointment³ and therefore no price was too great. He wrote to Hastings on 27 June 1772, 'The condition and situation of Munny Begum's present affairs, that she had been the head of the family from her deceased husband's life time; on and of her: a sensible woman.'⁴ Unfortunately for Nandakumar, the Begum always distrusted him, and Gurudas, who worked closely with the Begum never cared to improve the relation between his father and employer, even when his father became a very important person during the ascendancy of the Majority. What happened in the meantime is that the Begum developed a certain amount of friendship with Kantababu, the Banian to the Governor General, as revealed from the batch of letters discovered by Goring and sent to the Council with his letter of 13 June 1775.⁵ (Discussed in Chapter One of Volume II.).

¹Brit. Mus., Add Mss. No. 29125, ff 140-141

²Ibid. f. 219.

³Ibid. Add Mss. No. 29133 f 160

⁴Ibid., f 162-163

⁵ (i) Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings of 24 July, 1775, No. 4A
 (ii) Life and Times of Cantoo Baboo, Vol. II, Chapter One.

Nandakumar it seems was not aware of this on 11 March 1775, when he presented a letter from Munny Begum to the Council complaining of having given Rs. 1,50,000 to Hastings, which formed an important clause in his accusations. It said, 'Munny Begum with Rajah Goordas's knowledge in the month of Aughun 1179, paid this money to the Governor, Mr. Hastings by the means of Nurr Sing aforesaid.'⁶ Nandakumar further alleged that Hastings had asked for another sum of three lakhs Rupees (in the translation the figure is 3 lakhs of Rupees while in the original it is 3 or 2 lakhs of Rupees).⁷ On 22 April the Governor answered to the charges raised by Nandakumar. He informed the Council that the letter that had been presented to the Council in the name of Munny Begum was a forgery. The seal of the letter was compared with the original seal of the Begum and then Jagat Chand, the elder son-in-law of Nandakumar was sent to Munny Begum to ascertain the truth.⁸ After this till the death of Nandakumar matters moved quickly. The truth about the forging of the letter may perhaps be partially explained by the inactivity of Gurudas and Jagat Chand to save Nandakumar.

The anger of the Majority was expressed in the dismissal of Munny Begum. Goring acting on instructions divested her of her office. Raja Gurudas was invested with the authority of the Begum on 17 May 1775. The Begum's eunuch Etwar Ally Khan was dismissed and the account kept by Coosal Chand seized. The salary received by Munny Begum was also stopped by a resolution moved by General John Clavering.⁹ The Begum bitterly complained against the high handedness of Goring and sent a petition directly to the Court of Directors of the East India Company in London. She wrote about Nandakumar concluding, 'Such was the accursed traitor Nundcomar whose life but for our lenity had long ago paid the forfeit of his perfidy. Neither in justice to the happy discernment of his patrons can suffer the insolence and cruelty of Goring, the hopeful instrument of their tyranny.' She proceeded to explain, 'with the most unfeeling barbarity he banished me from my own house and forbade me any future intercourse with my family and children.'¹⁰

⁶Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings of 11 March, 1775 No. 5

⁷Ibid., of 13 March, 1775, Vol. 27, p 386-395

⁸Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings of 22 April, 1775

⁹Ibid., of 25 May 1775 (Forrest), Vol. II p 381-382

¹⁰Brit. Mus. Add Mss 29206, ff 44-61

After the Majority lost its power the relation between Hastings and Munny Begum improved very much becoming almost filial. This is also reflected by the fact that the Governor's Banian Kantababu paid the Begum almost the same amount of Gold mohurs as Nazar every Christmas as he paid to the Governor-General himself. Hastings wrote to Macpherson, his successor on the eve of his departure on February 6 1785, 'Of Munny Begum, I leave her to you my friend, to be her patron. There is a woman of virtue and all the female dependents of the Nawab Mir Jaffier subsist on her bounty. She has a adopted son, a descendant of Jaffier Ally Khawn, known as a Alcha Shaheb, a fine youth, do something for him.'¹¹ Munny Begum's last letter was sent to Hastings in England. After asking about the welfare of her dearest daughter which was Mrs. Hastings, she wrote in the rare and intimate first person (usually all official Persian correspondences were in the third person), 'I have heard by the favour of Mr. Chapman...that he has received a letter from my dearest son Warren Hastings dated the 19th June last, who informs him that the cause of my said son (has) become settled or decided in the Court of Europe and now if please God, the decree will be obtained soon. So great joy and gladness rose in my heart that it cannot well be described. May God...etc....etc....' This letter was dated 19 January, 1795*.¹²

Munny Begum built a mosque in the 'Chauke' of Murshidabad and was alive for a long time. She was a woman of exceptional abilities and proved to be a strong minded administrator in spite of many adversaries. She was of a kind, who rise at the time of political turmoils in a country, not to be found again till the next crisis. It is at these times they are required to wield power in the world of men. Munny Begum the 2nd of the four wives of Nawab Mir Jafar rose from the humblest of situations, being a common 'nautch girl' in the earlier part of her life, when she existed for the pleasures of others and was perhaps only slightly better than a woman of pleasure. Yet her capabilities reached to a level where she could be compared with a seasoned administrator. She retained her position as the head of the Nawab's family through the vicissitudes of time not only when she was the Nawab's wife or mother, but even when the children of her co-wives became the Nawabs of Bengal. She breathed

¹¹Ibid., Add. Mus., 29116, f 149

*She was the 2nd signatory after Nawab Mobarak-ud -dowlah along with the other members of the Nawab's family, of the letter dated 10 December 1787 sent to the House of Lords testifying that the administration of Warren Hastings was beneficial to the country. (See : Debates at the House of Lords on Impeachment, p 553-557)

¹²Brit. Mus. Add Mss, 29173, f 308.

her last on 10 January 1813 at 11 A.M.,¹³ leaving behind only one of her co-wives Wahlida Begum, while her other co-wife Babboo Begum having predeceased her in December 1809.¹⁴ Her death did create a lot of problems. Her will, her properties and her dependents continue to appear in the records, long after her death. There was a dispute over her will, where the Nawab of Bengal himself got involved.¹⁵ With Munny Begum ended a period in which the Nawab's household retained some independence. Her death put an end to all that and the Nawab's house-hold also like his administration became thoroughly dependent on the British Government.

¹³West Bengal District Records (New Series) Murshidabad Nizamat, Letters received, Part II, 1807-1855, Letter No. 202, p 86 and Letter No. 230, p 95 (Monckton to Brooke, 12 January, 1813).

¹⁴Ibid. Letter No. 16, p 6-7

¹⁵Ibid. Letter No. 236, p 101-104, letters Nos. 242, 249, 265 and 366, pp 107, 108-109, 112 and 140-145.

NOTES

1. The Caste System in Bengal

A great amount of confusion regarding the Bengal caste system still prevails in the books printed on the subject. This lack of knowledge has been found not only in students but also in those who are expected to have better knowledge. Prejudices and sentiments also play a major part in increasing the confusion. Consulting the Hindu law as it is practised in the law courts of Bengal, much of the persisting confusion would have been alleviated. Fine works of history has been joked about in the reviews because of the authors apparent imperfect knowledge of the complicated caste system, which is in a sense not complicated at all, if we try to understand the basic Hindu Law which has always received the full support of all the sections of the Hindu law-givers (Pundits) and the caste-heads (Samajpatis).

Let us therefore without much ado start at the beginning. If we go by the *gotras* (clans) which is the only mark of identification of a Hindu descent, it will be found that originally the castes were not fully defined and were easily interchangeable. Then came the rigidity of the castes and the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra were fully defined. The sub-castes developed with the rigidity of vocational distinction when each sub-caste group was limited to a profession or vocation.

During the long Mughal rule the caste system must have undergone a great change. In the eighteenth century Bengal, we find virtually two of the major castes only, the Brahmin who alone wore the *Upabit* (sacred thread) and the Sudra. It may be mentioned here that all the three upper castes, namely, the Brahmin, Kshatriya and the Vaisya, have the right to wear the sacred thread and be called twice born. Lack of *Upabit* and the ceremony of *Upanayan* in a caste or sub-caste group, strongly suggests a Sudra origin. But again those who wear the sacred thread may also be of a very low caste and hence the confusion.

So this discussion may be started with the premise that in 18th century Bengal there were left only two of the original four castes, namely, the Brahmin and the Sudra in the Hindu Society. Now the Brahmin had a few subsections amongst them. To make it less confusing the major

sections were (1) the very pure, (2) the fallen and (3) the lowly. The first group that is 'the very pure' were again divided into subsections called the Radhi (inhabitants of Radha or Rarh which roughly consists of the lower provinces in the right bank of the Ganges) and the Barendra (inhabitants generally of the Rajshahi lying in the right bank of the Padma) and the old Dinajpur District. There are two more groups who considered themselves purer than either the Radhi or Barendra, who called themselves Vaidic (the receptacle of the vedas) and Agnihotri (worshippers of the fire). Generally most of the 'very pure' Brahmin community of Bengal falls under the four groups described.

'The fallen' Brahmin is called the Pirili. They might have lost the fight with 'the very pure' group, having been relegated to second class in status and prestige. While 'the very pure' were entitled to use 'Sarma' as their common surname, the Pirili could only use 'Thakur'. The Pirili family which became famous are the Tagores of Pathuriaghata and Jorasanko of whom the most famous was perhaps Rabindranath Tagore who received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913. There were many important Tagores in the 19th and the 20th centuries starting with Prince Dwarkanath Tagore and Maharaja P. N. Tagore. The Pirilis did rather well in the society giving leadership to the Brahmo Dharma movement and after they had made some wealth they not only brought brides from the 'the very pure' families but also married their daughters into such houses. The Pirili of course was destined and society expected them to remain within their boundary of limitation.

Agradanis were those lowly Brahmins who accepted all gifts given by the Sudras. The purer groups only accepted the gifts of metals (gold, silver, copper and brass), stones (diamonds and other precious stones, marbles etc.), land and rice. But the Agradanis took everything that was given. (Now of course all presents are welcome to most). Thus they became an adjunct to all Hindu ceremonies when the purer Brahmins took away the cream and the Agradanis were entitled to the left overs. They however improved their income by becoming the sacerdotal advisers to the untouchables, the scheduled castes and those sects of the lowly and poor Sudras who did not receive attention from the other Brahmins.

So we know now that the half of the society consisting of Brahmins were very much dependent on the other half, who were the Sudras. The

Sudras were divided under the headings of (1) Nabasakh (the nine branches) or Sat Sudra (honest Sudras), (2) the Sudras or the Ajalchala (whose water cannot be taken) and (3) the untouchables. The purer Brahmins would never go beyond the Sat Sudras either in performing their sacerdotal duties or taking jobs under them. The Pirilis however were free to take on the whole of the Sudra sect, both Sat Sudras and the ajalachals, but they in their turn would never go to the untouchables who were left to the Agradani as described earlier. So the three major sections of the Brahmins suited themselves to the three main sections of the Sudra.

When I am going to describe who are the Nabasakh, I am going to put my hand into the hornets nest. Let me therefore first describe the nine branches of the Sat Sudras and then describe the prevailing disputes. What I am going to relate is the position that is at present accepted in the courts of law. The Nabasakhs are the following—(1) Vaidya (Physician), (2) Kayastha (writer), (3) Tili (general trader, coming from the word Taul meaning scale), (4) Tambuli (trader in betel and areca nuts), (5) Satgope, Goala or Gope (the milkman and cowherd), (6) Tanti (the weaver), (7) Napit (the barber), (8) Moyra (sweetmeat maker) and (9) the Gandha Banik (trader of spices).

According to the Hindu Law there can be no dispute about succession when marriage between these nine castes or subcastes are solemnised as they are considered to be of one and the same caste, namely Sudra. This is their prevailing legal status.

The Vaidyas were the first to dispute this position. They by virtue of their special position in the society, as physicians, claimed to be equal to the Brahmins and separate from the Nabasakhs. They started wearing the sacred thread, atleast as early as the 18th century and take up such sacerdotal duties that were limited to 'the very pure' Brahmins only. In their legal status they are still Sudra.

Around the late 19th century the Kayastha community of Calcutta who were also very influential, wealthy and powerful considered themselves to be better than the Nabasakhs. Though they did not claim equality to the Brahmin, they considered themselves to be only slightly below them in status. They introduced the 'kulinism' in their society like the Brahmins and jealously held the fort against the Nabasakhs

trying to prevent them from increasing either wealth, influence or power in Calcutta. They struck an alliance with the Brahmins and the Vaidyas and tried to claim that they were of a higher order than the others. This illusion still prevails and finds expression in many careless utterances and writings. The most ridiculous effort was when some people claimed that the word Kayastha was the abbreviation of the word Kshatriya, the second original caste, the warriors. They even refused to recognise the Kayasthas of the rural areas to be of the same caste. Legally they are Sudra.

In the resultant pressure that the Nabasakhs felt during the 19th century, they opened the doors to two more communities namely the Kamar (ironmonger) and the Kumar (the potter). Though the Vaidya and the Kayastha were not formally eliminated, two more communities were allowed the status of the Nabasakhs. To do this of course many oral evidences, rural ditties and popular poetries and songs were created denoting their equal status with the Nabasakh. These evidences did not have the names of the two communities who disclaimed their relation.

Important caste groups were organised in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Each of these groups brought out a monthly bulletin reminding the members of their community, of their status, duties and obligations to their caste group. I am sure, somebody will be working on this most interesting period, to bring out the group conflicts that existed at the time.

Soon however the Brahmins and the Nabasakhs who now called themselves 'caste Hindus' for the benefit of the new foreign Government, got together to keep out the 'Sudras' as the others came to be known, from entering the precincts of business. The eighteenth century records show several attempts by the 'Sudras' meaning generally the Ajalachals to enter the silk and the foodgrain trade, which ended in their failure. They were forced to remain within the precincts of their own vocation and profession till English education and law ultimately released them from their bondage in the late nineteenth and the twentieth century.

It is for this reason the word 'Sudra' attained such a stigma that a member of the 'caste Hindu' felt small if it was known that he was really a Sudra. Attempts to be termed as 'Vaisya' the third original caste, the

merchants, were invoked and many caste groups started to call themselves utter ridiculously by that name. Many continue to do it. Soon however some of the 'Sudra' trading communities who had become rich and powerful also started to claim that they were Vaisyas too.

Here it may be noted that though the original three upper classes wore the sacred thread, wearing the sacred thread in itself does not denote caste status. Both in the South-Eastern and in Northern India, almost everybody including Ajalachals wear the sacred thread even though they are Sudras. This is however not done in Bengal.

Now the reasons of the confusion can be perhaps better understood. It has also been explained why the word 'Sudra' created such a confusion and why the Sat Sudra Nabasakhs are so reluctant to identify themselves with the other Sudras and call themselves 'Caste-Hindu'.

Before conclusion a few caste movements can be described. The barbers who acted as surgeons in assisting the Vaidyas soon claimed the caste and entered it in a large number. Two famous historians fought over the issue of 'Ambostha' for a long time. Similarly the Kayasthas having become such an acceptable caste has been adopted by many who had any doubt about their caste or its acceptability. It was particularly adopted by the refugees from Bangladesh who felt that claiming this caste will give them more opportunities in and around the cities which was once dominated by the Kayasthas.

Generally it is always the poor who have tried to change their caste clandestinely. The wealthier people or groups have not attempted any change as they felt more security and strength by maintaining their own caste-groups.

Though this note is not at all exhaustive nor does it answer all the questions that may come to one's mind, this can be considered to be a preliminary attempt to straighten out some of the ridiculous notions about the caste system. As a working social system it has never been static, undergoing changes all the time. It can be said therefore that none of the caste groups have maintained their purity. Hundreds of instances can be quoted when different Sudra groups have managed to become Brahmins by devious ways and the poorer Sudra groups moved themselves into a richer subcaste which offered more opportunities of job and service.

Recently with the Indian Government reserving jobs and opportunities for the untouchables, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes there is a tremendous rush from almost all caste groups, to be considered as eligible to take advantage of the concessions. Thus a reversal in the movement can be traced. Upto now of course this rush is limited to individuals and not to groups. Honour and opportunities have been the main driving factor of the Bengal caste system, which is true of the old ages as it is true of now.

2. The Impact of the English East India Company on the Society of Bengal in the latter part of the 18th Century.*

The battle of Buxar and the Grant of Dewanee established the English East India Company as the real rulers of the Bengal Subah in 1765. The only rival to their power, the Bengal Nawab was a minor and not at all capable of challenging the foreigners. In fact the Nawab came to depend upon them not only as partners in administration, but also as his protector. Soon the Nawab was reduced to a pension holder and the authority of administration was wielded fully by the English Company.

Bengal did not dislike the coming of the merchants. They welcomed their presence as an insurance against insurgents, particularly in the areas where the Portuguese or Mug (Arakani) pirates were active. The respect in which the rebel Shobha Sing and his compatriots treated the English Company, leave no doubt that the prowess of the English Company was already an established fact. That was also the reason why the population of Calcutta, a city established and controlled by the Company, rose so quickly.

Let us now pause for a moment and try to envisage what the society was like before 1765. The Mughal power was in shambles. The Marhattas after raising the hopes of establishing a *Hindupat Padshahi* (an Imperial Govt. of the Hindus) were now clearly in descendance. The Holkar, the Peshwa, the Scindia and other Marhatta leaders were still very strong individually, but all were now on the defensive and none capable of wresting the Government from the Mughals.

In Bengal the Marhatta raids which started in 1742 raised the hope that a Hindu king might be ruling in Delhi. Bharatchandra's trilogy cannot conceal the expectation that as Man Singha defeated Raja

* Summary of the talk delivered at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London on 9 May, 1978.

Pratap the rebel ruler of Jessore with the help of the ancestors of the Kings of Nadia, so in a similar manner the present ruler of Nadia may help the 'Bargi King' (Bargi is the common parlance by which the Marhatta raids are known, it springs from the word Bargir which means soldiers who preceded the real army. Bharatchandra considered Bargi to be the name of a part of West India), to get rid of the *yabana* Alivardi Khan from the Bengal Subah. In spite of the tremendous suffering that the people of Bengal had to undergo by these raids, and the loss of people and property they had to tolerate, the hope of being liberated by the Bargis only proves how great was their dislike of the Mughal Government. So the starting point of our discussion today will be that there was a strong feeling against the Mughal Government.

The luxury of the Mughal life often led to debaucheries. For their continuous supply to pleasure the power drunk rulers often snatched away girls and some times boys from their hearth and homes. Jean Law relates how the Nawab's followers used to collect girls while they went to bathe in the river. The public tank was not a safe place either, where it was necessary to go to fetch water and wash. Every family therefore lived like an island. Communication was generally limited to the elder male members of the family or to the head of the family alone. Not knowing who might be an informer, the women were precluded from appearing before an outsider. When out in the public the Hindu women developed a style of wearing the sari which covered them up completely as if in a bag, the head-cover or *ghomta* came up to the naval to hide their face, shape and body, while the Muslim women made extensive use of the *burkha*. Whenever any Bengali became rich the first priority was always to have a private watering place or to excavate a tank by buying the adjacent land, so that the ladies of the house did not have to go to the public tanks or to the river, by the public road and be a commodity of surveillance by the public gaze. The cautiousness was some times carried too far. Quite a few sections of Hindus are known to have discouraged marriage to fair looking girls, who might herself catch the fancy of some powerful grandee or give birth to a fair and beautiful girl who might be enticed away or stolen by some agency who always gained by trading in fair girls. The Suttie thus became a meaningful custom particularly if the widow was young and goodlooking. This fear of abduction was so much that even wealthy families declined to keep maid servants, as a result of which the ladies of the house were left to do all the household score themselves. This will explain why a second or even a third wife to the husband was not always

very much disliked, in fact sometimes it was welcomed, as that meant more hands to share the same work. The joint family system also was very much meaningful because of this. A happy family was like Kantababu's where five brothers lived together with their wives and children. Even when the third brother died young, his family continued to reside with the others.

Taxes were another source of complaint. The general rule that the Hindu paid in many items double the duty paid by the Muslim, was bad enough to create a grievance amongst the Hindus, but curiously this did not create any ill feeling or tension between the two communities. If in the 18th Century the Hindu and the Muslim were not friends, they were no enemies either. They moved in their own orbits of activity never transgressing their limits of religion or social contact. Life and business brought them together, sometimes a Hindu, who wanted to take advantage of the rates of duty, took a Muslim as his partner. If the partner was a sleeping one, he got his share of money and if he was an active one, his share of business. They co-operated with each other genuinely, sometimes with devotion and warmth, but never left their respective cubicles where they were permanently embedded. For example they would not invite each other to their homes, nor would they eat or drink together, possibly the Hindu would even avoid touching the Muslim, and the Muslim talking about religion to the Hindu. This lack of social communication did not, fortunately, create many problems as the public relations were good. The Muslims were yet the rulers and they were quite satisfied with that lot. Maharaja Mohanlal sold his sister to Nawab Siraj-ud-dowla and married his daughter to a Muslim hero, so he was accepted into the Muslim Society, though never formally adopting the faith. He was however considered to be a Muslim, by the Hindus. The Hindus generally kept their public life completely compartmentalised from their private. Even their dress, custom and manner were quite different. They adopted the formal dress of the time with many variations so as not to be confused with the gentlemen of the other faith. The paintings of the ordinary people of the time help in forming this conclusion, though the differences were far less prominent in the high officials and the aristocrats of the time.

Several taxes were resented among which were the taxation on marriage, festivals, death and cremation. All these taxes hurt the non-muslim population more. Then there was the profession tax, which was

generally payable by the city dwellers, but there is nothing to prove that the rural population were exempted. As long as this tax was collected the people had to use their professional surnames also, which explains the quick disappearance of vocational surnames with the change of time.

Nothing hurt the vast Hindu population more than the constraints on their religion. The laws of Emperor Shah Jehan prevented them from even repairing the old temples in areas where the muslim population was majority. The foudars demonstrated the fact that the sand was hotter than the sun, and generally prevented repairs to temples in many areas. The *pathsalas* or schools that were situated in the temples, thus were gradually destroyed and the *tols* and *chatuspatis* faced extinction. As a result of which the sanskrit teachers congregated in places where they were not only protected but also received the patronage of the local ruler. Krisnachandra, the Raja of Nadia thus came to be considered as the leader of Hindus, though he was *stained* or lower category Brahmin. The resentment at his capture and imprisonment by Nawab Alivardi was so high that he was released, after having promised to pay his revenues regularly. It was firmly believed that Alivardi had destroyed the Siva lingam in Bhubaneswar (Orissa) and that the Marhatta raids were his retribution for this sin. The tradition continued and even the fall of Siraj-ud-dowla was considered to be the result of Alivardi's sins. In spite of saving Bengal from the Marhatta raids, Alivardi was neither considered to be a just or able ruler.

Emperor Aurangzeb saw that his laws were enforced. This only created more ill feeling. The Jajiya, a tax to be paid by the non-believers and the pilgrim tax, which were collected at all the important places of pilgrimage including Gaya was very much resented. The Hindu belief that if wroshipped at Gaya, all their ancestors are freed from the cycle of sin and rebirth, made the levy of taxes seem extremely oppressive. The desecration of the Jagannath Temple at Puri by Ekram Khan in 1687 under the orders of the Emperor and forcible conversion to Islam of Ramchandra II, the Raja of Khurda in 1727 who was the traditional superintendent of the Jagannath temple, shocked the Hindus very greatly. Even in 1734 it was believed that Taqi Khan was trying to destroy the temple and was unable to do so because of the miraculous powers of the deity. It was only after the Jagannath Temple came under the Marhatta protection in 1751 that the Hindus from all over India started visiting the temple freely. If Jagannath temple created ill feeling among the Hindu Vaisnabs, it

became a thousand times more severe when the Viswanath temple of Benares was first destroyed and then turned into a mosque. Another old temple in Benaras, that of Benimadhab was also desecrated and turned into a mosque. When the two tall minarets which served as a land mark of Benaras for the last two hundred years fell down and were destroyed the other day, the jubilation that was shown was both genuine but fanatic. After the destruction of the temple, the Viswanath Deity was worshipped in the well of *Gyan Byapi* where it is said to have been hidden irrevocably. It was only after Rani Ahalyabai of Holkar constructed the new temple that the deity was reinstated in his former glory. Even today a twentyfour hour police picket has to be kept posted in the old mosque which was once the famous temple.

The religious festivities particularly all public worship of Gods by the unbeliever remained banned in Mughal India. This created displeasure but curiously no dissensions. The Bengali Hindu had to be satisfied with their private worship. A stray temple could be erected here or there with great difficulty, of course with the permission of the local *foujdar*. The *sankirtan* or the chanting of the Gods' name collectively to tune with the accompaniment of *mridangas* and *kartalis* could be held only in the closeness of somebody's house, the reading from the holy books like the Bhagabat or the Chaitanya Charitamrita or Chandi Mangal was also limited within the four walls of some influential men.

But politically the Hindus were rising to power. The plot for getting rid of Nawab Siraj-ud-dowla was hatched by Maharaja Durlabhram commonly known as Roy Durlabh, the Jagat Seths were a power to reckon with and the main force behind the revolution which was enacted in Plassey in 1757. It will be interesting to know what made Hastings suggest the name of Raja Rajballabh as alternate to Mir Kasim, for the post of the Subahdar, when Nawab Mirjafar was recommended to be removed from his post.

The English East India Company generally transacted their business with Hindu merchants. In the Cossimbazar Consultations there is not a single *dadney* merchant who was not a Hindu. In Calcutta also the records will tell the same story. There will be found a total scarcity of mohammedans in the trading accounts. Examination of the salt producing districts under the Foujdar of Hooghly which covered the salt made in Hijli, Tamlook, Mahisadal, Sujamootha and Kaoramall etc. will show that amidst more than 200 names between 1768 to 1774, there are only

three muslims to be found. In Cossimbazar a place so close to Murshidabad, the then seat of the Government, there was not a single muslim employed as the *gomastha* to the English factory to look after the various transactions of silk which was fast becoming the most important commodity of commerce. In 1757 all the nine *gomastas* were Hindu. All the silk traders with the a single exception from 1771 to 1780 were non muslims. When we look into the silk accounts of Krisna Kanta Nandy or Cantoo Babu, the banian of Warren Hastings, it is found that out of 99 merchants he traded with in 1773-74 only one was a muslim and that person also was the same as the one who is found in Company's books, as a partner of Kantababu's son Lokenath. Being an astute businessman Kantababu was obviously taking advantage of the preferential taxes by taking a muslim as a partner. This fact becomes even stronger when we come to know that Kantababu depended on a large group of Muslim tailor-weavers called *Bandrahagar* who were the secret of his silk fortunes and on whom was left the job of producing all the silk piece goods that he sold to the English Company and others.

All these examples drive to a single conclusion that the non-muslim merchants who were trading with the English company, drew closer after the battle of Plassey. By commercial contact they established a relation with the English Company which they never had with their Muslim rulers. As their financial standards improved the Bengali Hindu became extremely strict in their private lives. They now could claim some social prestige also. All the banians of the Englishmen belonged to this community. They now had the friendship and backing of this enterprising nation, who were turning out to be the real rulers of Bengal. The Banians definitely took advantage of this newly acquired power, not only for acquiring properties or wealth but also for getting fair brides for their sons. They felt safe now and knew that abduction of women and their forcible conversion was now a matter of the past. Now they were even bold enough to employ maidservants in the house. It is interesting to note that in 1770 of the three maidservants that were kept by Kantababu in Cossimbazar, a predominantly rural area, not even one was a Bengali. This was only the extension of an old custom of having Bihari Hindu servants and Punjabi Muslim bodyguards.

As the administration of the East India Company established itself and the offending laws were discarded, Calcutta immediately celebrated the occasion with lavish spending in marriages and other social functions.

The patronisation of Sanskrit led to the springing up or re-establishment of several Sanskrit schools particularly in Nadia and Benaras. The Tribeni scholars (those who were established in Saptagram) regrouped and then moved nearer to Calcutta. The newly rich Bengali Hindus most of whom were curiously non-Brahmins, turned out as the greatest patrons of the Brahmin Pundits who were settled with grants of land and regular emoluments. These newly rich leaders of the society were ready to impress the foreigners as the protectors of the religion and learning. They were undoubtedly emulating Krishnachandra, the Maharaja of Nadia but with a difference. The Nadia Raja protected the scholars, when the Mughal rule was destroying the conventional teachings, but the new patrons of religion and learning did it with an ulterior motive. Maharaja Nabakrisna being the wisest started the tradition of patronisation which was followed by others. Nabakrisna did not even spare the Raja of Nadia, but wrested out from him the deity Gopeenath of Agradwipa for a debt of three lakhs of Rupees. This became the presiding deity of his house. One of the complaints against Krishnachandra was that being a *sakta* or an worshipper of *shakti*, he was neglecting the Visnu image of Gopeenath. Once again a pattern emerges. All the new leaders of the society wanted to be concerned as a patron of religion. Kantababu, a devout Vaisnab, brought the Laxminarayan *sila* (stone) in 1781 from Bijaygarh after the sack of the fort. Gocul Ghoshal established Siva temples and called the place Bhu-Kailash (Kailash in earth). By 1790 several Hindu festivities were publicly performed. Following the engravings of Solvyns the list would be read as Ramayangan, Mahabharatpath, Jhulanjatra, Snanjatra, Rathajatra and Charak puja, all except the last are Vaisnab festivities.

With this newly found religious freedom and the abolition of the obnoxious taxes on marriage, death, cremation etc. the Hindus could not but be grateful to the administrators of the English Company. Donation of land for the construction of churches became the sign of Hindu gratitude. So many churches were built in Hindu lands or in their areas. They most probably reasoned that if the *firingi* had their own place of worship, they may not go back to their country. Their stay was absolutely necessary to keep the decadent Mughal rule at bay. There can be little doubt that the vast majority wanted the English Company to settle in India and to continue to hold the reins of administration. The rule of law established by Hastings after reforming the judicial system, had the approval of the people. Now be he Hingan Shaheb, a relation of the Nawab or Ensign Norton, an English sailor, both were severely punished for their crimes, the latter with death penalty for causing the death of an ordinary public

woman in Katwa. The rule of law became an established fact and all grievances could be brought to the Supreme Court. The notes of Justice John Hyde show how quickly the natives adopted the English legal system. If one carefully reads the testimonials of the local people given and presented during the impeachment of Warren Hastings he will be amazed to find the range and variety of vocations who testified to the success of Hastings' administration and they were not merely certificates dutifully given to safeguard the deeds of an ex-Governor General.

With the establishment of the Permanent Settlement and the removal of the death tax in 1789, when it was levied for the last time on the Nadia Raja, palaces started to spring up on all sides. Gone were the days when money and property had to be hidden from the authorities. Now with the law and order steady, the wealthy proclaimed their riches, with trumpets so to say, from the house tops of their new built palaces. The style was borrowed in most cases from English buildings, then copied from one to the other. The new Zemindar cared little whether the pillars in his house were Doric or Ionian, or whether the pattern of the building was Georgian or Edwardian, his main concern was that the pillars should not be thinner or smaller in shape, size and number than his rival and there should be many windows to denote his higher status in the society.

As fear receded social contact became more pronounced. There was communication between people which gradually increased. A hundred years later it became a ridiculous pastime, almost a habit to sit around with friends and flatterers with *hooka* or wine and food to talk aimlessly but continuously. (The name given to such a practice is 'Adda' which according to the late Dr. Mujtaba Ali of Santiniketan, is a word without an origin).

The food habits changed. The strict Vaisnaba 'Falar' with which Kantababu used to entertain, died with him. 'Falar' was a mixture of flattened rice, sugar, curd and bananas, which was the traditional Vaisnaba food for all festive occasions. Lokenath, the son of Kantababu served the guests hot rice and fish, in the fashion of the city, when he fed his friends and relations after performing the *sradh* ceremony of his father in 1794. Even then, fish entered the strictly vegetarian household only on the occasion of this death anniversary, though Lokenath himself, his ladies and the children of the family remained strictly vegetarian. But change was in the air and sophisticated vegetables like the potato and

cauliflower were being consumed. The preference of sweets made from pulses was giving way to sweets made from cheese.

The Brahmins started receiving social veneration in money regularly. They also settled in various places in groups, so as to be easily found. The *Brata* and *Parban* which were performed for the welfare of the house involved both men and women. This led slowly in later years to the domination of the Brahmins, who quoted scriptures to suit their own advantage and soon became the lawgivers of the society. Rani Bhawani could not get the desired interpretation for adoption from the Nadia Pundits, so she secured one from the Benaras Pundits, whom it was alleged, she paid a sum of Rs. 40,000/- from time to time. It was by adopting the verdict of Benaras, that Rani Bhawani perpetually placed them in a higher order than the Nadia scholars. Soon it was good to become a Brahmin, as they could live without working. The *kulin* system in the 19th century was carried to such ridiculous extreme that 300 marriages were considered legal, in fact marriage became a profession. Then there is that funny story about the barber's unmarried daughter being with child, when she was married to an old dying *Kulin* and lo and behold by the death of one Brahmin, three new ones were created, the daughter, her child and the father who now proudly showed the sacred thread he now wore in the new village they had now adopted to live in. In spite of such stories, the Brahmins adopted to trade and commerce quite early in the century and were the second largest business group to settle in Calcutta after the weaver community.

In the latter part of the 18th century almost any enterprising person could take to trade. If he was wise his endeavours succeeded. The avenues of earning money became so numerous, that it became easy for any hard working man with a sense of direction and organisation to make money. The time helped. One could buy pulses at a very cheap rate in the neighbourhood of Patna and transport them by boat to Calcutta.

The establishment of the laws of succession became the greatest boon of the Company's administration. Now everybody had the opportunity of planning his life and amassing wealth for their progeny. If one was law abiding, kept to the orders of good social life and paid his revenue and taxes in time regularly, he could gather together any amount of property and fortune without hindrance. In fact now one could die in peace with the satisfaction that his son will be able to enjoy the fruits of his toil and

could increase the income, provided he was efficient and hardworking. A few succeeded while many squandered away their patrimony, but the right to property was an established fact.

English Company servants at this time mingled with the natives freely. Some of them wore Indian dress, fed Vaisnabs, took part or paid for *sankirtans* and gave *pela* or money during the *sradh* ceremony of the Hindus. Their consideration for their Indian wife and children could not but create a lot of sympathy. Their patronisation of the Sanskrit language and the establishment of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in January, 1784, made them very much respected. Now the discriminating rates of taxes between Hindus and Muslims were first reduced then equalled. The road to the famous Jagannath temple in Puri was made completely safe from the Marhattas and then opened to public. The 'moordah Jumma', the tax the Hindus paid for burning their dead was first sharply reduced then completely abolished by Hastings on 7th October 1773. The much respected Raja Krisnachandra of Nadia was honoured with the title of 'Maharaja' by no less a person but Lord Clive himself in 1766. How could all this fail to impress the Bengali Hindu, who overjoyed at the realisation that they could now easily prune the many Muslim customs and fashions, they were compelled to adopt, discarded the turban from their everyday dress, though retaining it for formal occasions. The 18th century saw the Hindus closer to the administration. English words started entering into the Bengali language and within the second quarter of the next century a fashion developed of using more English words at the time of speaking in Bengali. The young Bengali of 1830 tried to completely copy the English manners of dress, eating and drinking. The beginning of this was apparent as the English education became gradually popular. The first English school in Murshidabad was opened in Saidabad on 1st November, 1837 under the patronage of fifteen year old Krisnath, the great grandson of Kantababu.

By the second decade of the nineteenth century the changes in the Bengali Hindu Society were complete. As the crowning piece of these changes emerged the Durga Puja festivities which came to be celebrated in Autumn every year. Daniel records this event as early as 1810. How this ceremony became a regular function of the Zemindar's is hard to explain but there was the philanthropic motive which gradually developed and flowered into this annual gathering where every part of the society was allotted its share of duty. The Bengali Hindus became

quite benevolent. Their houses had a fair share of Muslim servants. The elephants, horses and carriages were traditionally left to the Muslim charge, but they were also the chief cash carrier, protector and body guard. The Punjabi Muslim Jamadar and his co-religionists could be closely attached to a very conservative and traditional Hindu Vaisnab family. The relaxed Bengali Hindu could not but reflect their English administrators. It was no accident that the first printing press, the first Bengali grammar and the first Bengali newspaper were started by Englishmen who worked closely with their Bengali assistants. Even the pattern of the Bengali alphabet started to change. Now it was more rounded which helped greatly the flow of writing. There was so much cultural exchange between the two communities, that not only the English in India were considered to be different than their countrymen at home but the Bengali Hindu became truly Anglo-Indian in their cultural outlook. Years later Bengal produced many wonderful English poets, two of whom were ladies, great English orators, a member each of the House of Lords and the House of Commons and hundreds of anglophile who considered England to be their true home.

If the Bengali Hindu of 1770 would meet a co-religionist fifty years later there would be no communication between them, nor any recognition. The former would not understand the fervour with which the latter was patronising the spread of English education, what was worse he might be even imitating a lot of English manners and customs. The impact of the English East India Company undoubtedly changed the character of the Bengali. They became quite different in their outlook of life. Their closeness to law, science and education made Bengal the greatest dispenser of knowledge. Their mind became tuned to cause and effect, making them true citizens of the age of reason. But it was not all for the better. Many faults which started as a fashion gradually increased to create problems in the society. Much later when they adopted many English political systems and started to live with them like their own, they forgot what they were before the coming of the English and some at least started to believe that the country and its people were like this always.

3. Tables of conversion

(1) Money :

4 Kara = 1 Gonda

20 Gondas, 4 Pice or 12 Pies = 1 Anna

16 Annas = 1 Rupee

14 or 16 Rupees = 1 Gold Mohar

Rupees 8 = 1 Sterling Pound (18th Century)

Rupees 10 = Do. (19th Century)

Rupees 13.33 = Do. (1st half of 20th Century)

Rupees 19 = Do. (1981)

(2) Land Measurement :

16 Chattacks = 1 Katha

20 Kathas = 1 Bigha = 720 Square Feet

3.0083 Bengal Bighas = 1 Acre

(3) Weights :

4 Chattaks = 1 Powa or Pao

4 Powas or Paos = 1 Seer

40 Seers = 1 Maund

1 Maund = 2.92 Cwts.

1 Maund = 82 Lbs.

27.50 Maunds = 1 Ton.

4. The copy of the deed dated 30 Chaitra 1166 B.S. in which Rani Bhawani of Natore sold the Taluk Sripur, a property in Murshidabad to Krisna Kanta Nandy. The translation in English given here was in made connection of a suit and was done by the Official Translator of Supreme Court on 22 October, 1824

Kanungoe's
Attestation
Sri Adoyanarain
Goopra

1156

Sd/- Syed Goolam
Rusool
Nybe of servant
of the Laws
Kazee Zyed
Mahammud Khan

I Ranney Bhabany am the Zemindar of Purgunnah Raujsahee Etcetera.

Whereas the Kismut of Sripore Etcetera, better known as Khallah Baree comprehended within the Purgunnah of Gurraihaut in Purgunnah Raujsahee Etcetera within Chucklah Moorshidabad (the Khalsah Sherriffah Mehal) which is fixed at the Toomary¹ Jummah of six hundred and fifty nine Rupees one anna eighteen gundahs and one cowree (659:1:18:1) and the former Tallokders Radakissen and others being unable to pay the Revenue and having become considerably in arrears upto the Bengalley year 1166—deliver in a surrender² in writing and owing to default in management, there has been a considerable deficiency in the Revenue for the year 1166—Therefore, I do of my free will and inclination, for the consideration of the sum of One thousand and one Rupee sicca, the currency of the time of good standard and full weight, give the said entire Kismut of the said Mouzahs together with the Maul³ the Tanks, Gardens, fruits bearing and other trees (bounded by boundaries notoriously known) unto Kessenkanth, the son of Radakessen, the son of Seetaram inhabitants of Cossimbazar, as a Talook—and having received the said amount consideration in ready money, paid to me by the

¹ Dufter or Roll

² Estafah

³ Rupees money wealth poyseyright

aforenamed, I have carried the same to the arrears of the Kismut of the said Mauzah.

The aforenamed having possessed the said Kismuts and caused this Talook to be entered in his own name, and paying the Maulgoozary at the average rate of the Puergunnah and possessing the same down to his sons and grandsons, let him be the proprietor of the gift and sale thereof—The aforenamed has no concern with any arrears or balance for and concerning the period of the possession of the late Talookdars—And hereafter between me the obligor and the said late Talookdars and their heirs there is no claim or demand nor does any exist.

Therefore these words are executed and delivered in the nature of a Talookdary Grant.⁴

Kismut of 10 Mouzahs—the specific portions of those Mouzahs is 3:11:5:1.

	Rs.	as.	Gd.	Cowrie
Kismut Sripore	—	—	7	—
Kismut Jote Issuf	—	7	14	1
Kismut Ramkissenpore	—	4	6	—
Kismut Jote Joykissen	—	7	10	—
Kismut Srikissenpore	—	—	13	—
Kismut Kissenbullavpore	—	10	16	3
Kismut Gobindpore	—	1	14	—
Kismut Jote Bazar	—	1	16	—
Kismut Sorbojoy	—	8	1	3
Kismut Hosain Cooleepore	—	7	1	3
Kismut Jullu Gungah	—	—	3	2
Kismut Dehudarree	—	—	5	3
Kismut Maindee Hosain Cooleepore	—	5	11	3
Kismut Dhoobeghutta	—	—	4	3½
Kismut Marocha	—	—	5	2
Kismut Joykissenpore	—	—	13	—
Kismut Moortojahpore	—	1	9	—
Kismut Kadeeraband	—	—	5	1½

⁴ Sunnad

The total Toomaree Jummah	.. 659:	1:	18:	1
Viz. Kismut Radakissen in 15 unequal portions—				
The specific portion	: 15:	1:	3	
The fixed toomary Jummah	170:	7:	6:	0
Kismut Kissenjiwan in 15 unequal portions				
The specific portion	:13:	0:	1	The fixed toomary Jummah 135: 12: 6: 0
Kismut Muddoo in 15 unequal portions				
The specific portion	:14:	8:	0	The fixed toomary Jummah 170: 7: 7: 1
Kismut Mahadaw in 15 unequal portions				
The specific portion	:14:	7:	3	The fixed toomary Jummah 170: 7: 7: 2
Kismut Mukko One Kismut unequal				
The specific portion	: 13:	0	The fixed toomary Jummah 3: 14: 13: 0	
Kismut Gourubullab in three unequal portions				
The specific portion	1:	14:	2	The fixed toomary Jummah 8: 0: 18: 3

Written and dated the 22nd Twentysecond day of the month of Shabaun-Ul-Mouzzum in the 1st year of the Accession ; Answering to the 30th thirtieth day of the month of Chait in the Bengalley year 1166.

To the worthy of Remembrance Sri Kissenkanto Nundee, the son of Radhakristo Nundee, the son of Seetaram Nundee, Inhabitant of Cossimbazar within the Purgunnah of Kismut Choonah Khalley, This bill of sale is granted in the year 1166—Eleven hundred and sixtysix, as follows—

Within my Zemindarry, the Kismut of Sripore Etcetera appertaining to the Purgunnah of Gussair Haut in the Sircar of Barbuckaband, in the Khalsah Shureefah Mehal in Chucklah Moorshidabad comprised within the Chucklah of Raujsahee, that appertained to the late Talookdars Radhakisto Mondal, Kristojiban Mondal, Modoosoodan Mondal,

Mahadaib Mondal, Takoo Mondal and Goureebollob, which said Tallokdars, being unable to pay the Maulgoozarry^A and becoming greatly in arrears upto the year sixtyfive had delivered in a surrender^B in writing and owing to default in management during the said year there had been considerable defalcation in the Maulgoozarry^C for which reason I do of my free will and inclination for the consideration of the sum of 1001 One thousand and one Rupee Sicca, give you as Talook, the said Kismuts^D (agreeably to particulars and their Metes and bounds) with the cultivated and fallow lands, the water, the fruit and wood lands, and the tanks and gardens and having received the said amount consideration from you in ready money from hand to hand in the currency of the time, I have paid in the same in liquidation of the arrears on account of the said Kismuts—You having caused the same to be entered in the Dufter^E as a Tallook in your name and paying in the Revenue along with my Zemindarry (dues) according to the rate of the Purgunnah will enjoy the same unmolested down to you sons, grandsons and so on. You have the right of gift and sale, you have no concern with the Annual balance due by the Tallookdars. Hereafter, if any person shall make any claim against the said Talloks, the same is void.

A. Rent, Revenue

B. Estafah

C. Revenue

D. A Division or Portion

E. Papers, Books, Records

Details :—

	Portion as follows	Rada- kristo	Kristo- jibon	Modoo- soodan	Mahadaib	Takoo	Goureebollob
	Gds	Gds	Gds	Gds	Gds	Gds	
Kist. Sripore	x-x-7-x	x-x-1-3	x-x-1-3	x-x-1-3	x-x-1-3	—	—
Kist Issob	x-7-17-1	x-1-19-2	x-1-19-1	x-1-19-1	x-1-19-	—	—
Kist Ramkristopore	x-4-6-x	x-1-1-2	x-1-1-2	x-1-1-2	x-1-1-2	—	—
Kist Jote Joykristo	x-7-10-x	x-1-17-2	x-1-17-2	x-1-17-2	x-1-17-2	—	—
Kist Srikristopore	x-x-13-x	x-x-3-1	x-x-3-1	x-x-3-1	x-x-3-1	—	—
Kist Kristobollobpore	x-10-16-3	x-2-15-1	x-2-10-3	x-2-15-2	x-2-15-1	—	—
Kist Gobindopore	x-1-17-x	x-x-9-1	x-x-9-1	x-x-9-1	x-x-9-1	—	—
Kist Jote Bazar	x-1-16-x	x-x-9-x	x-x-9-x	x-x-9-x	x-x-9-x	—	—
Kist Sarbojaya	x-8-1-3	x-2-19-3	x-1-11-2	x-1-18-3	x-1-18-3	—	—
Kist Hosain Cooleepore	x-7-1-3	x-1-11-3	x-1-11-x	—	—	—	—
Kist Jollu Gungah	x-x-3-2	x-x-1-x	x-x-x-2	x- -x	x-x-1-x	—	—
Kist Dehudarree	x-x-5-3	x-x-1-1	x-x-1-x	x-x-1-2	x-x-2-x	—	—
Kist Maindu Hosain							
Cooleepore	x-5-11-3	x-1-8-x	x-1-8-x	x-1-8-x	x-1-7-3	—	—
Kist Dhoobyghutta	x-x-4-3½	x-x-1-x	x-x-1-x	x-x-2-x	x-x-x-3½	—	x-x-x-½
Kist Marocha	x-x-5-2	x-x-2-x	x-x-1-3	x-x-x-2	x-x-1-1	—	—
Kist Joykistopore	x-x-13-x	—	—	—	—	x-x-13-x	—
Kist Moortoiahpore	x-1-9-¼	—	—	—	—	—	x-1-9-¼
Kist Kadeeraband	x-x-5-1¼	—	—	—	—	—	x-x-5-1¼
Portion	3-11-5-1	x-15-1-2	x-13-0-1	x-14-8-1	x-14-7-3	x-x-13-x	x-1-14-2
Portion	659-1-18-2	170-7-6-x	135-12-6-x	170-7-7-1	170-7-7-2	3-14-13-x	8-x-18-3

To this purport I grant this Bill of sale only year above. Date 30th thirtieth Choitro—Stn. Coolbereah
A true translation of the annexed paper No. 2222

Sd/- W. D. Smith
22nd October, 1824.

30th Chaitro 1166 Ranny Bobanny to Kissencaunt Nandy	Supreme Court Plea Side First Term 0825 Hurrynauth Roy -Vs-	Supreme Court Plea Side Sittings after fourth term 1830
Bill of Sale for a Talook Sreepore called Khallah Baree	Saumchurn Nundy and Ramchurn Nundy Translation of Exhibit No. 23 produced for and on the behalf of the Plaintiff this 22nd day of January 1825 R. O. Dowda Clerk of the Depm. and read for the Plaintiff, this 24th January 1825 R. O. Dowda Records clerk	Hurrynauth Roy -Vs- Guruchurn Nundy and Bissnochurn Nundy Translation of Exhibit No. 23 produced and read for and or the behalf of the Plaintiff this 26th day of November 1830 R. O. Dowda Records Clerk

Strattell
Plffs Attorney

1156
Syed Golam Russool
Nybe. of the Servant
of the Laws
Kazee Zyed Muhammad Khan

5. The Bengali deed of 11 Aswin, 1206 by which Sreemati Chaitnyacharan Debakanya, the wife of Baisnab Charan Nandy sold her property to Maharaja Lokenath Bahadur.

১ টাকা
বয়া কাগজ

গালা মোহর

শ্রী ৩ বৈষ্ণবচরণ নন্দিনো
বনিতয়া
সং শ্রীপুর

ইয়াদি কির্দ সকলামঙ্গলালয় শ্রীমহারাজা লোকনাথ বাহাহুর
ওলদে ৩কৃষ্ণকান্ত নন্দি ইবনে ৩রাধাকৃষ্ণ নন্দি সত্বদার চরিত্রেষু

খরিদিগি দাদে ৩বৈষ্ণবচরণ নন্দির বনিতা চৈতন্যচরণ দেবকন্যা
কন্য তালুক ভূমি বিক্রয়পত্রমিদং কার্য্যক্ষেপে শ্রীযুক্ত ঈশ্বরচন্দ্র রায়ে
জমিদারি পঃ উখরা ও গয়রহর মধ্যে পঃ বুড়নের ডিহি হাজিপুর ও ডিহি
নবাতকাটি মতালকে জেলা নদীয়া মোকাম কলিকাতার বোড
বিবি সেওরের কাছারিতে আমার স্বামি নিলামে খরিদ করিয়াছিলেন
তাহার পণবাহা মঃ ৯৩০০ নয় হাজার তিনশত টাকা মহাশয়ের স্থানে
লইয়া তেরজারিতে দাখিল করিয়াছিলেন আর ইহার সদরের সনন্দ
হাসিল করিবার খরচা মঃ ২০০ দুইশত টাকা ও জিলার দখলি পরওয়ানা ও
আর ২ খরচা কীবল মঃ ১৪৭/১০ একশত সাতচল্লিশ টাকা দেড় আনা
একুনে মঃ ৯৬৪৭/১০ নয় হাজার ছয়শত সাতচল্লিশ টাকা দেড় আনার
এক কেতা সরতি একরার লিখিয়া দিয়া মঃ মজকুর লইয়া হজুরের
বয়নামা আপন নামে হাসিল করিয়া মহাশয়ের নিকট রাখিয়াছেন।
একরার মজকুরের মজমুল এই যে মবলগে ৯৬৪৭/১০ নয় হাজার ছয়শত

সাতচল্লিশ দেড় আনা মহাশয়ের স্থানে লইয়াছি প্রযুক্ত ডিহি মায় মজকুরের সনন্দ ও দখলি পরওয়ানা দুই কেতা কাগজ মহাশয়ের নিকট রাখিয়া করার করিতেছি মিত্তি দরমাহ কিস্তি ১ এক টাকা হিসাবে মায় মিত্তি বেবাক টাকা এক বৎসরের মধ্যে না দিই এই দুই কেতা পরওয়ানা মহাশয় আপন নিজের জানিয়া ডিহি মজকুরান আপন জানিয়া নিজের লোক দিয়া আমল দখল উমুল তহসিল করিয়া ভোগ কাফেজে আনিবেন মনস্থ হয়। এই একরার সদরে কিম্বা জেলার কালেক্টরিতে গুজরাইয়া খারিজ দাখিল করিয়া লইবেন। ইতিমধ্যে তাহার শ্রীশ্রীপ্রাপ্ত হইল আমার অজ্ঞাতে এ খবর হাকিমের হজুর জাহির হওনে আমার স্বশ্রুত ৩নৃসিংহ বাবুর নামে ডিহি মজকুরান খারিজ দাখিল করিবার হজুর হইতে চকুম সাদীব হইয়াছিল। তাহার নামে তালুক খারিজ দাখিল না হইতে বাবু মজকুরের লোকান্তর হইলে তালুক মজকুরের ওয়ারিশ আমি মহাশয়ের টাকা মালিকী একরার আদায় হয় নাই এবং কোনমতে আমার হইতে আদায় হইতে পারে না অতএব আপন স্বেচ্ছাপূর্বক বহাল তবিত্তে এই একরারে আসল মং ৯৬৪৭/১০ নয় হাজার ছয়শত সাতচল্লিশ টাকা দেড় আনা অল্প মিত্তি ইন্তক নাগাইদ কিস্তি দরমাহা ১ এক টাকা হিসাবে ২৪৯৫১/৪ দুই হাজার চারিশত পঁচানব্বই টাকা পাঁচ আনা চারি গুণা একুনে মং ১২,১৪২৯/১৪ বার হাজার এক শত বেয়াল্লিশ টাকা ছয় আনা চৌদ্দ গুণা পণ বাহাতে ডিহি মজকুরান মহাশয়ের স্থানে বিক্রয় করিলাম মহাশয় ডিহি হায় মজকুরানের দরোবস্ত মোজা হায় মাফিক তপশীল জায়ত বয়নামা জামিন হাসিল ও পতিত রাইয়তি ও খামার ও চাকরান ও জলকর ও বনকর ও ফলকর ও নলকর ও তালাব ও গদিবা ও বিল ও ঝিল ও বাগাৎ সবৃক্ষ ফলা বিফলা সজল স্থলে সবিজ লওয়ায় দেবোত্তর ও ব্রহ্মত্তর ও মহাত্মাণ ও পিরান ও ফকিরান ও গয়রহ লাখেবাজ আমল দখল করিয়া আমার স্বামীর নাম হইতে খারিজ করিয়া সদরে আপন নামে তালুক লেখাইয়া মাকেক তাহত সন বসন সরকারে মালগুজারি করিয়া পুত্রপৌত্রাদি ক্রমে পরমশুখে ভোগ করহ দান বিক্রয় স্বত্বাধিকারী মহাশয়ের আমার সহিত এবং আমার আর কোন ওয়ারিশান সহিত দাওয়া নাই কস্মিনকালে কেহ দাওয়া করে ও করি সে বুটা ও বাতিল এতদর্থে তালুক বিক্রয় কবালা পত্র দিল ইতি সন ১২০৬ বারশত ছয় সাল তারিখ ১১ আশ্বিন বুধবার।

কারসী হতে অনুবাদ ॥

বাদশাহ

১৪ শুবৈজাত বাঙ্গলা

বেহার উড়িষ্যার কিদবী

ইংরাজ কোম্পানী দিউয়ান

মোহর খালসা শরিফা

দয়ামূল বিশুদ্ধ মহদৌপাধিক নবাব গবর্ণর জেনারেল বাহাদুরের কৌনসেল এজলাসের উপদেশ অনুসারে ও তদনুযায়ী মহামান্য রিবনিউ বোর্ডের সাহেবগণের হুকুমমত জেলা নদীয়া শহর কৃষ্ণনগরের মহারাজা ঈশ্বরচন্দ্র রায়ের জমিদারী পরগণে বুঢ়নের কার্য্যাধীন ডিহি নবাতকাটি ও ডিহি হাজিপুর যাহার রাজস্ব নিম্নের তফসিল অনুযায়ী মবলগে নয় হাজার তিনশত একাত্তর টাকা বার আনা সাত গুণা এক কড়া বাবতে বাঙ্গলা সন ১২০৩ সালের বাকী মালগুজারী আদায় জন্ম কলিকাতা মোকামে রিবনিউ বোর্ডের দপ্তর খানায় সেক্রেটারী সাহেবের হুজুরে নিলাম দ্বারা বিক্রয় হওয়ায় বোলদাঃ মুর্শিদাবাদের কাসেমবাজার মহলা নিবাসী বমণৌচরণ নন্দি চৌধুরী (বৈষ্ণবচরণ নন্দি চৌধুরী) সাময়িক চলিত মবলগে সিকা নয় হাজার তিনশত টাকা মূল্যে খরিদ করিয়া উল্লেখিত মূল্যের সমস্ত টাকা আবাদকারী সরকারের খাজনাখানায় দাখিল করিল, প্রস্তাবিত ডিহি সকলে পরিচিত ও বিখ্যাত সাবেক জমিদারের যাহা কিছু প্রভুত্ব অধিকার ছিল তৎ সমস্ত সঙ্গে খরিদার মজকুর এলাকা গ্রহণ করিল। নাম গৃহীত ব্যক্তিসঙ্গে দখল পাইবার প্রার্থনা রাখে।

ডিহি নবাতকাটি ও গয়রা :—

২ লাট

ডাক নিলাম

৯৩০০ টাকা

অবধারিত—১৩৭১৮৭।

লিখিত তারিখ ২৯ উনত্রিশ মাহে জুলাই সন ১৭৯৭ সাল ইসবী মোতাবেকে ১৬ ষোলত্রিঃ মাহে শ্রাবণ সন ১২০৪ সাল বাঙ্গলা

ডিহি নবাতকাটি আমলে

পরগণে বুঢ়ন

১ লাট স্বিরিকৃত ১৩ মোজা

ডাক নিলাম ৪৪০০ সিকা

ডিহি হাজিপুর আমলে

পরগণে বুঢ়ন

১ লাট অবধারিত ১৫ মোজা

ডাক নিলাম ৪৯০০ সিকা

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৪৭১৪৥২৫৫

সন ১৭৯৭ ইংরাজী
 ১৮ আঠারত্রিমাহে আগষ্ট
 মোতাবেক ৫ পঁচত্রিমাহে
 ভাদ্র সন ১২০৪ সাল
 বাঙ্গলা নকল হইল ।

CORRIGENDUM

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	<i>Incorrect</i>	<i>Correct</i>
43	22	this	his
47	19	an	a
48	30	pos	post
74	5	reterred	referred
79	10	Cossimba ar	Cossimbazar
97	6	in	an
98	8	very.	very
98	18	Shipbrasad	Shibprasad
99	14	20	2
111	32	Awabs	Abawabs
122	17	or	of
127	25	1789	1779
130	19	of out	out of
131	19	trouble	troubles
151	7	Berieh	Berjeh
154	21	displsal	disposal
166	13	he	the
170	17	this	the
171	16	the	that
171	32	made the	made by the
172	15	aitcles	articles
172	15	Bazzee, Jumma	Bazzee Jumma
197	20	Dewance	Dewanec
207	10	this	his
207	13	Baharound	Baharbund
218	22	Grart	Grant
235	16	Two	Three
237	25	the	be
238	19	happend	happened
275	37	the	of
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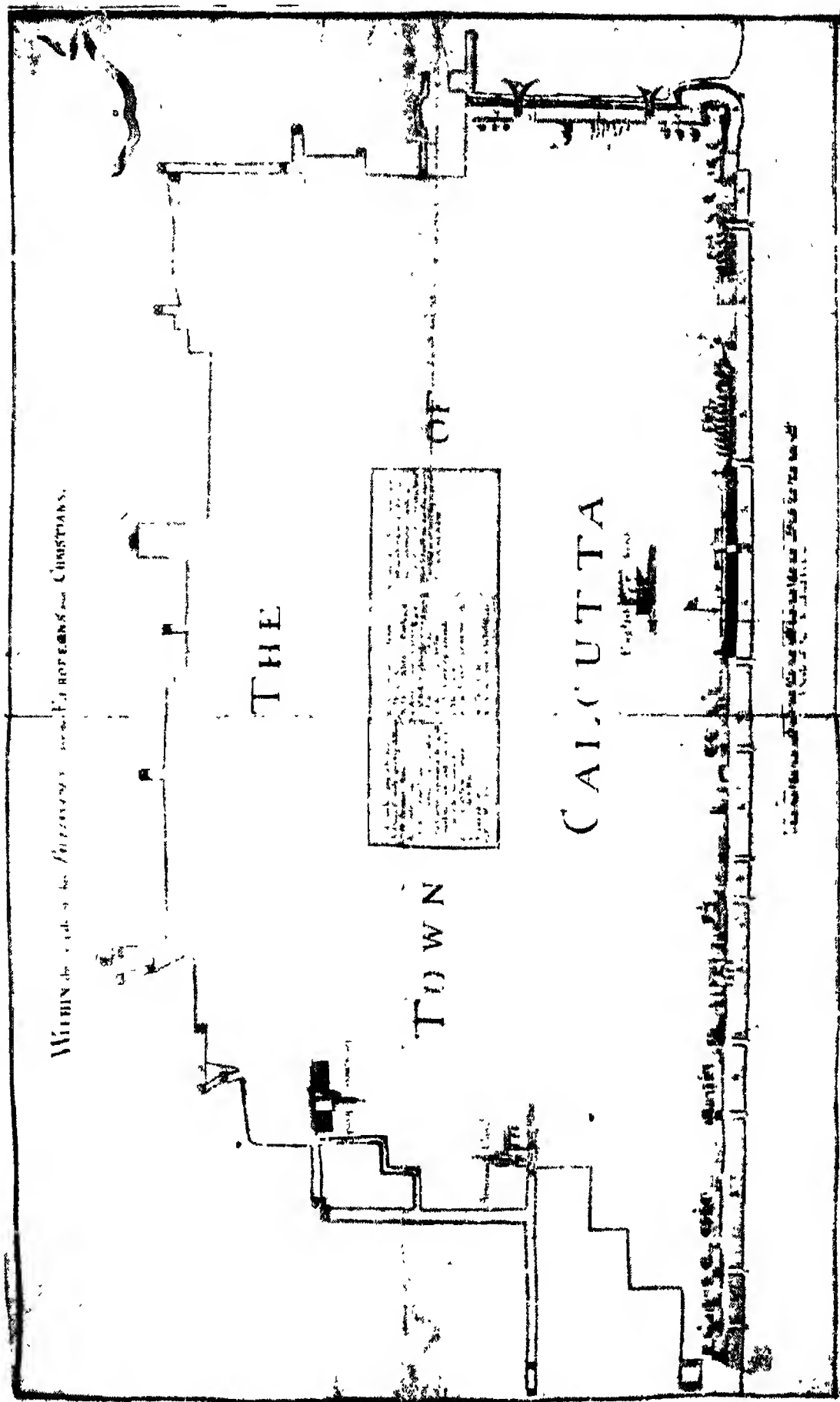
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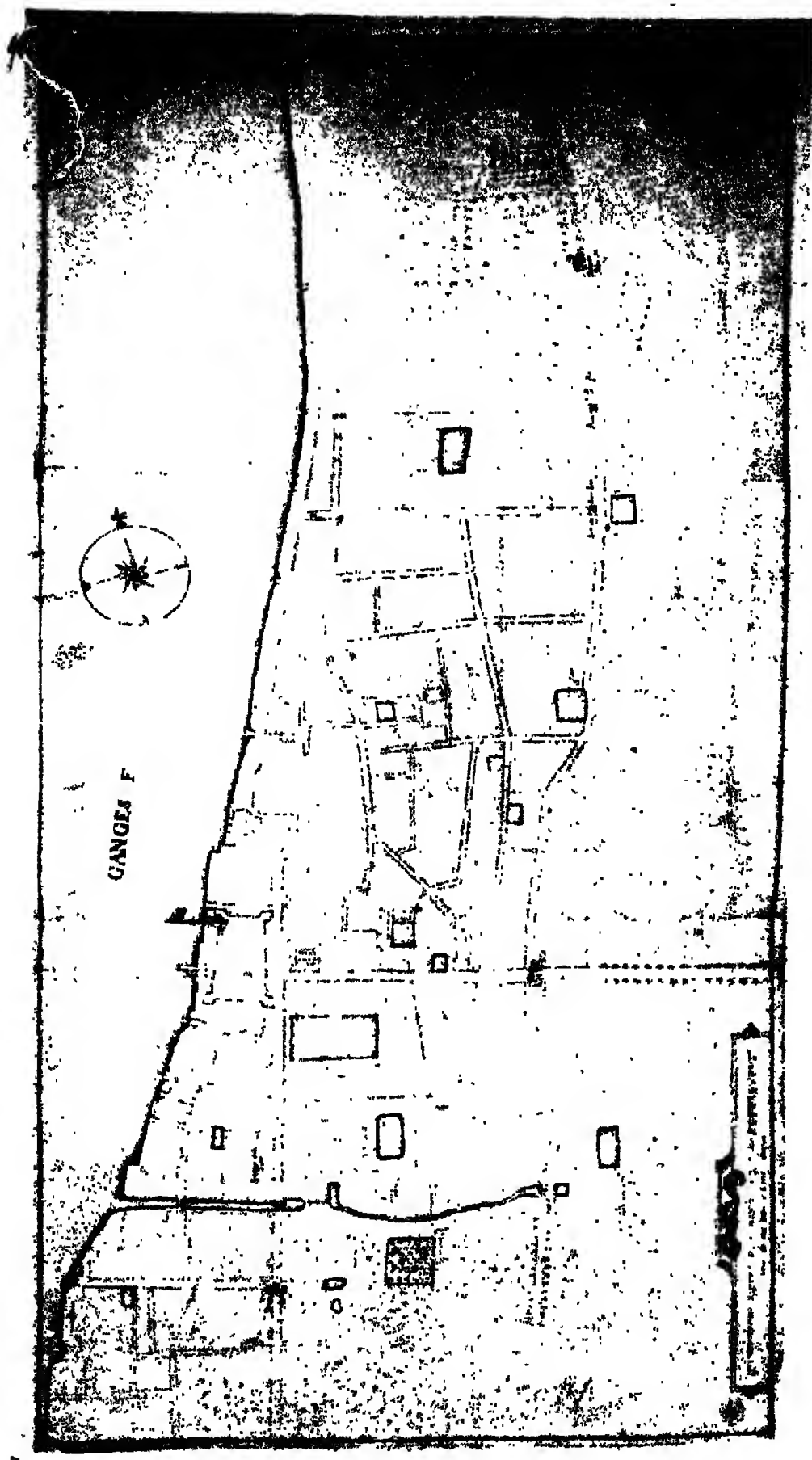
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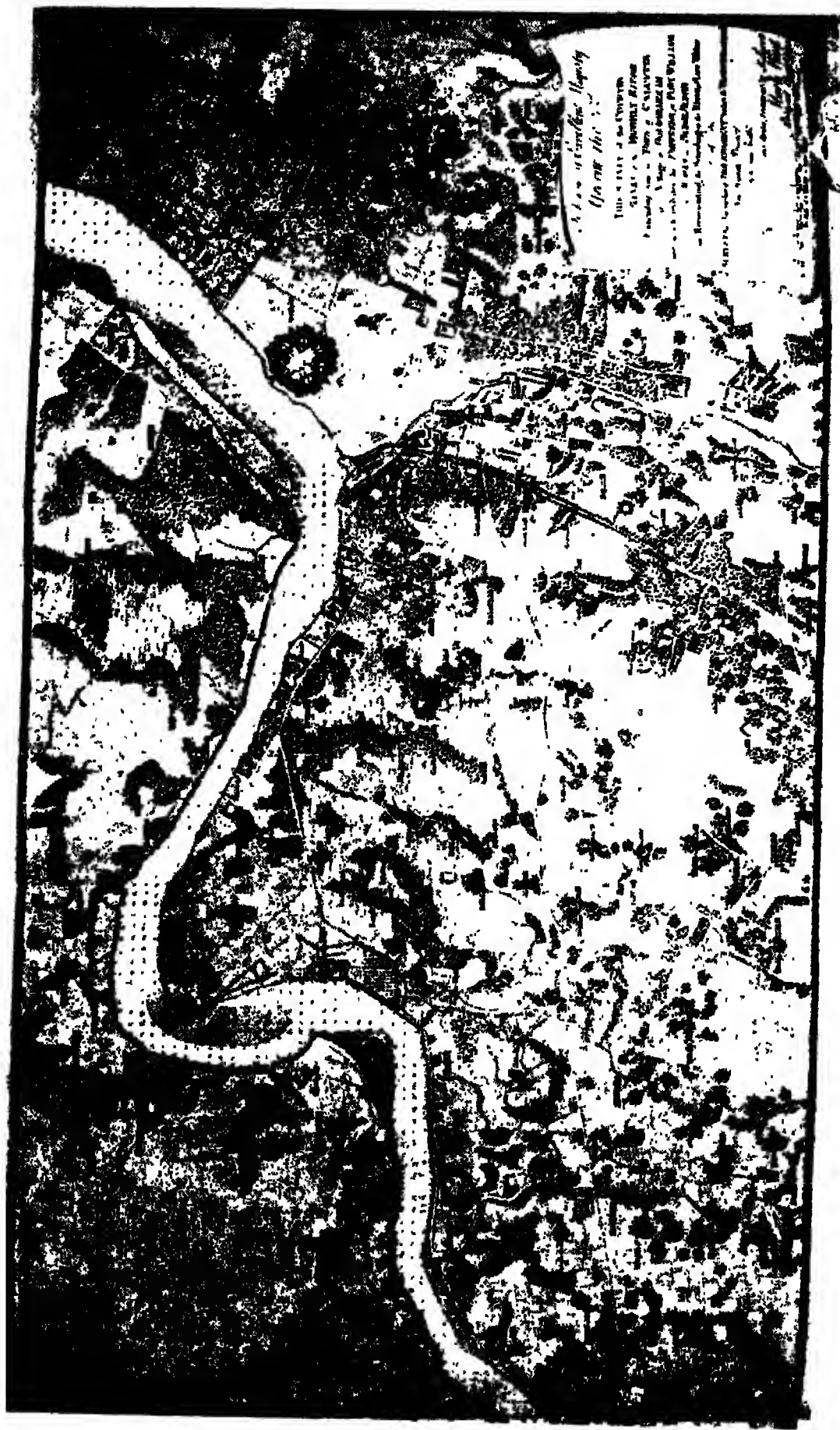
PLATES



1. Calcutta, 1742 (British Museum)



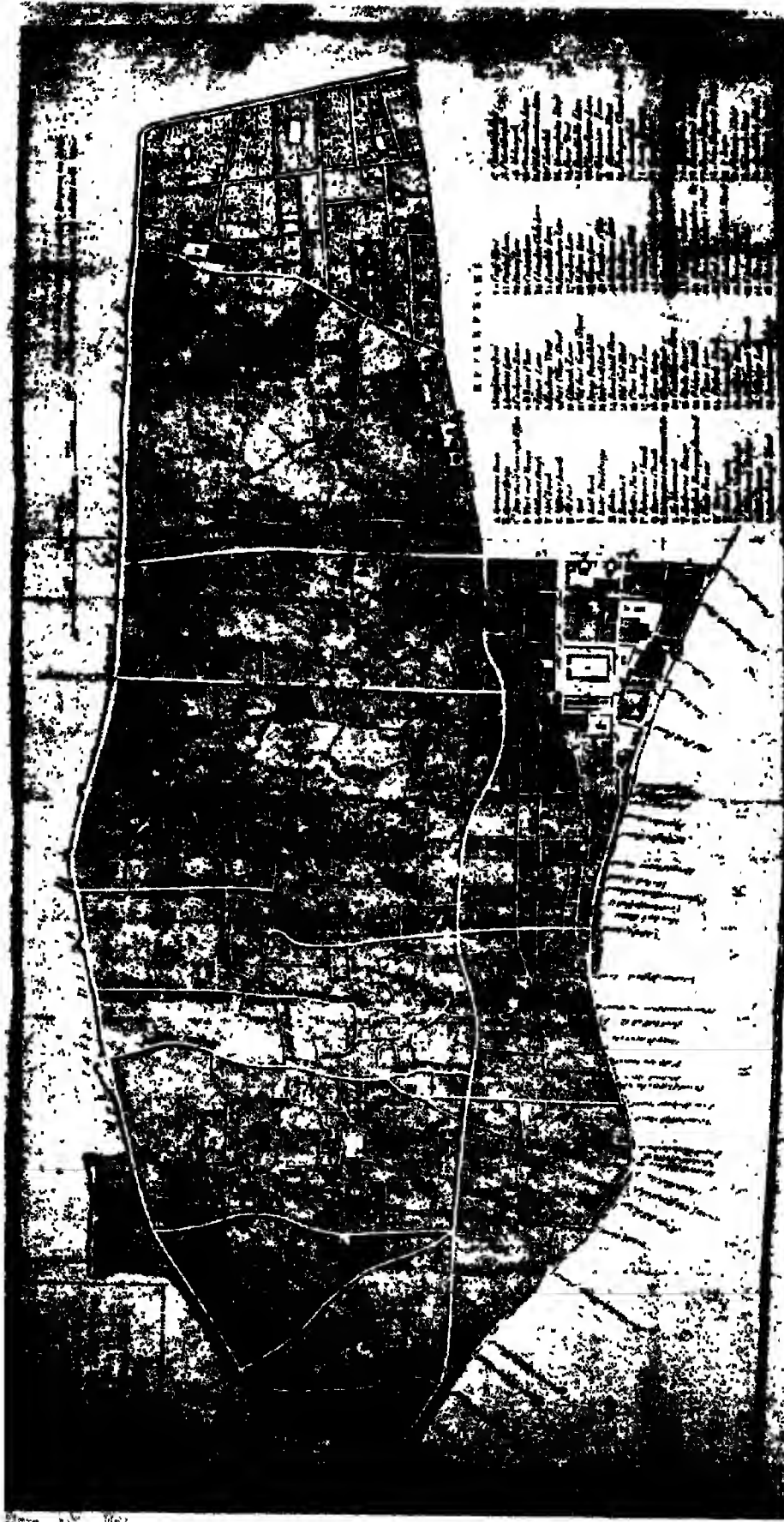
3. Calcutta (Date unidentified, M 53 British Museum)



4. Calcutta by Col. Mark Wood, 1780-84, entitled 'Banks of the Hooghly River' (British Museum)



5. Calcutta by Col. Mark Wood, 1782-83 showing the growth of the city (British Museum)



6. Calcutta by William Baillie, 1784-85, plan of Calcutta (British Museum)

Cantoo Baboo

Pay to His
Friend Nease Lunkar the
sum of One thousand
Rupees on my
Warrant Hastings.

Calcutta
16. Aug. 1775.

7. An order of Hastings to Cantoo Baboo (British Museum)

Handwritten text in Devanagari script, likely the reverse side of the order, showing the sum of 1000 Rupees.

Handwritten text in Devanagari script, likely the reverse side of the order, showing the sum of 1000 Rupees.

9. How notes were kept by Cantoo Baboo in Hastings' documents (British Museum)

8. The reverse side of the order above (British Museum)

To Francis Taylor

1. *Indica*
in *Angkor*

Upon are hereby in his Majesty's
 required to come before us Sir Richard
 Knight Chief Chamber of the Exchequer
 de Justice and Justice of the Supreme Court of
 Judicature at Westminister in England to
 answer to a Charge exhibited against
 you on the 1st of November next
 for conspiring against the Honourable
 Walter Hastings Richard Barrett Esquire
 Esquire the Right Honourable
 Chief Justice of the Court of the
 Bench in the Forenoon of the
 twentieth Instant at the House of the
 Chichester Esquire as you will answer the
 contrary at you. (Seal). Given under
 our Hand and Seal this nineteenth day of
 April one thousand seven hundred and eighty
 five. — F. Jones

F. J. May

Robt. Chambers

(J.B. Downing)

To Mrs. Ky. Dec.



1. A Bastion of the Old Fort
2. Principal Gateway of the Fort, which is the Black Hole
3. The Bastion of the Old Fort
4. A Dwelling House formerly Mr. Middleton's
5. Another Dwelling House
6. The House of Mr. Richardson, formerly Mr. Vane's
7. Office to the British Consul
8. A private Dwelling House
9. The Theatre, built by subscription about 20 years ago
10. A large square in the middle of the town, which you have an entire view of the city from
11. A large square in the middle of the town, which you have an entire view of the city from
12. Part of the wall that encloses a piece of ground adjoining to the Fort

12 Views of Calcutta by William Hickey drawn on October, 1789 with descriptions of the houses in front of the old fort (No. 11, Victoria Memorial)



- (This is a view of a fort of ~~Calcutta~~ called Chouringhee; the whole has been built within the last twelve years, it extends a mile and a half further than this view and all within London)
1. Is a house belonging to the Estate of the late Sir Robert Bt.
 2. A house belonging to Sir John, the military, the Major Col Murray lives in it
 - 3 and 4 Both belong to Sir Wood Mr Dawson lives in one the other empty
 - 5 Sir Henry Roberts
 - 6 Mr Hays the present General occupies by the Gentle Sir John Stuart
 - 7 A house at present occupied by Sir Lordship the Hon brother of Henry.
 - 8 A house occupied by Sir Sir Harrison, paymaster
 - 9 Now unoccupied (Colonel Pinder lately lived in it)
 10. Houses on the Esplanade
- Chouringhee commences at the East End of the Esplanade, that is the most distant from the river.

13. Views of Calcutta by William Hickey, drawn on October 1789 with the description of the houses in Chowringhee (No. 1, Victoria Memorial)

Sir Edward Hay Esq

Secretary to the Government

Sir

We request You will be so good
as to make known to the Governor
General in Council our readiness to
become Secretaries to the Government
for Mr Foley in his Capacity of Civil
Paymaster.

We have the honor to be

Sir

Your most Obedt^t Servants

Palanthe

Dec 27. 1790

(C)

ब्रजराज नरि

कोलकाता

The Petition of Sheik Rahmutallah -

Vaqueel on the part of Lognaut Nundee son
of Kishon Nundee Nundee Appellant

By a Decree of the Indian Government
admitted St. 1962 is due to my client from Agide
Goroo Nundee Zemindar of Pachete. A long time
ago an order was sent to the Mofussil Judge to
enforce the decision, & the Judge finding no other
means of his liquidating the amount, then by the date
of his Zemindari sent a notification of the lands due
due to the Board of Revenue; but the amount quantity
of land & amount not being at all sufficient to satisfy
the Board sent some more to the Board to be added
as amount into the Mofussil which was done -
I now understand that an order is about to be sent
to the Board directing him to surrender the plan of a
Kishon Nundee Nundee Nundee to the Board, that
the Mofussil Judge was ordered to sign and the Mofussil
Judge did not sign it and of his to do, but did not
sign the instrument. My client has been a long
time waiting for it and the Justice of the
Mofussil has no right but if another Mofussil
is sent the Mofussil will be ^{informed} that confidence
can my client not possibly have in the Mofussil
Mofussil

15. A petition of the Vakil of Lokenath Nandy, son of Cantoo Baboo.
The first page of the English rendering. (Victoria Memorial)



16. A map of Bengal and Bihar showing Bijaygarh (Victoria Memorial)



17. *The fort of Bijaygarh by Daniell (IOL)*



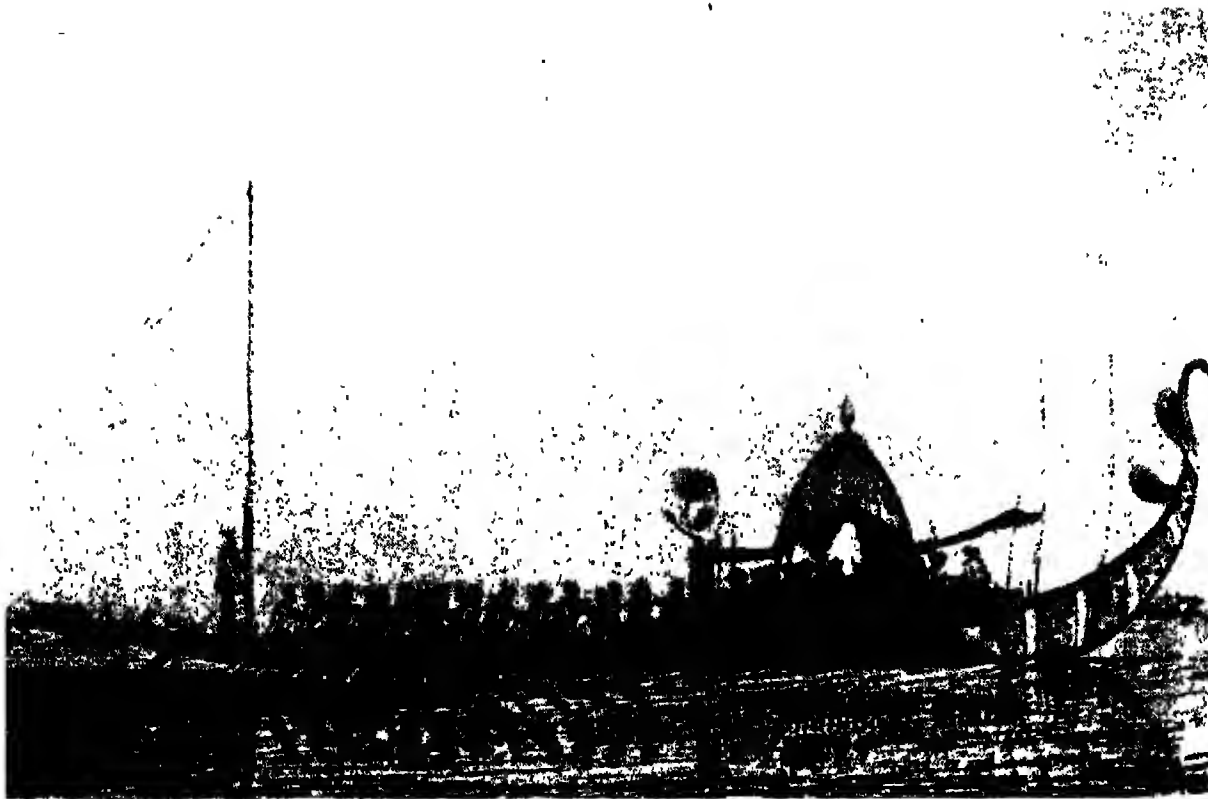
18. *The fort of Bijaygarh by William Hodges, 1786 (IOL).*



19. The Fort of Bijaygarh by William Daniell, 1790. (Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Co., London.)



20. *Clive Street, 1790 by Solvyns. (Victoria Memorial)*



21. *An official Mayurpankhi, around 1790, Calcutta by Solvyns. (V.M.)*



22. *Jhulanjatra, 1790 by Solvyns. (Victoria Memorial)*



23. *Harisankirttan, Calcutta, 1790 by Solvyns. (Victoria Memorial)*



24. *Ramayangan, 1790 by Solwys. (Victoria Memorial)*



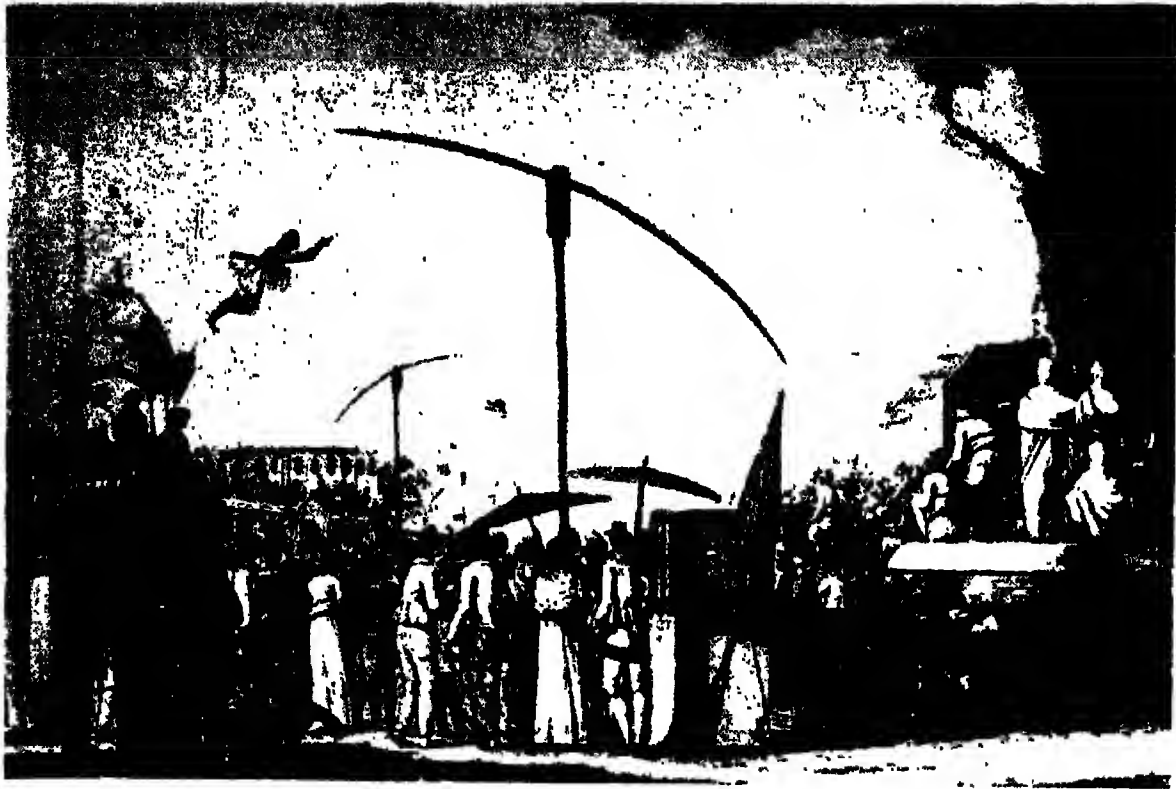
25. *Nautch, Calcutta, 1790 by Solwys. (Victoria Memorial)*



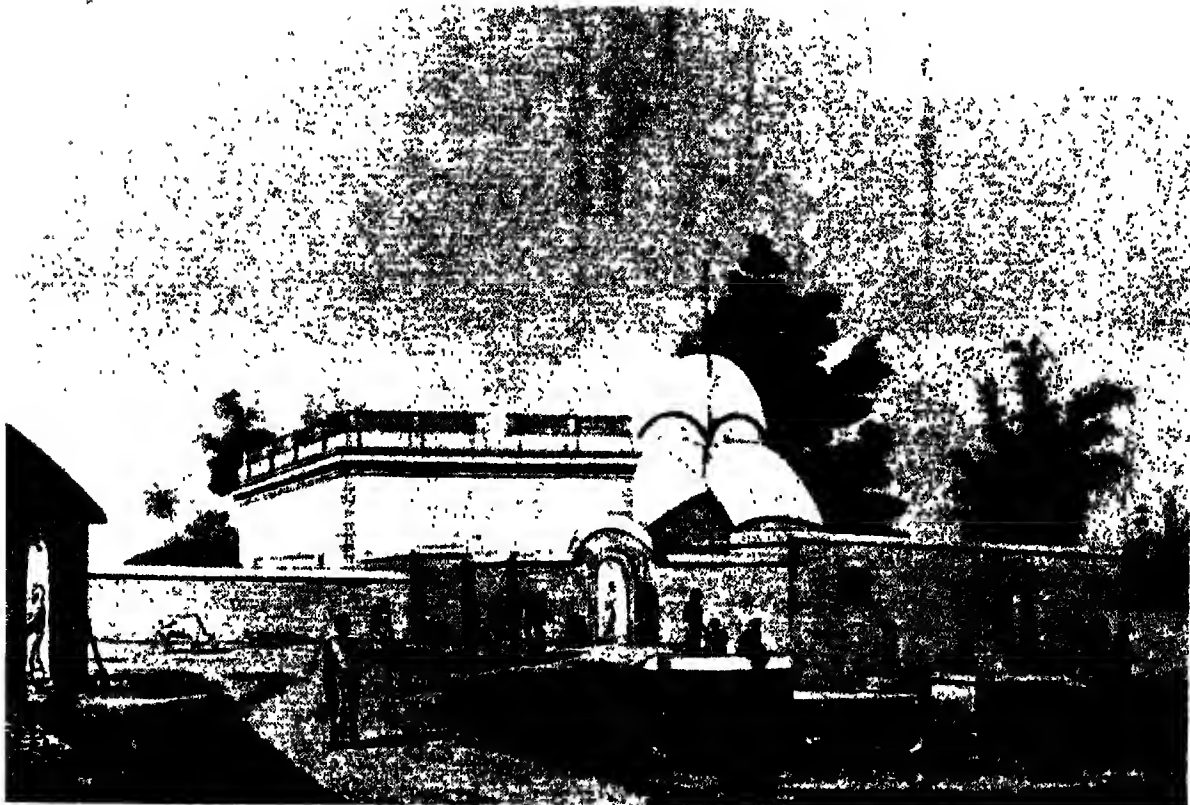
26. Chait Singh (*Victoria Memorial*)



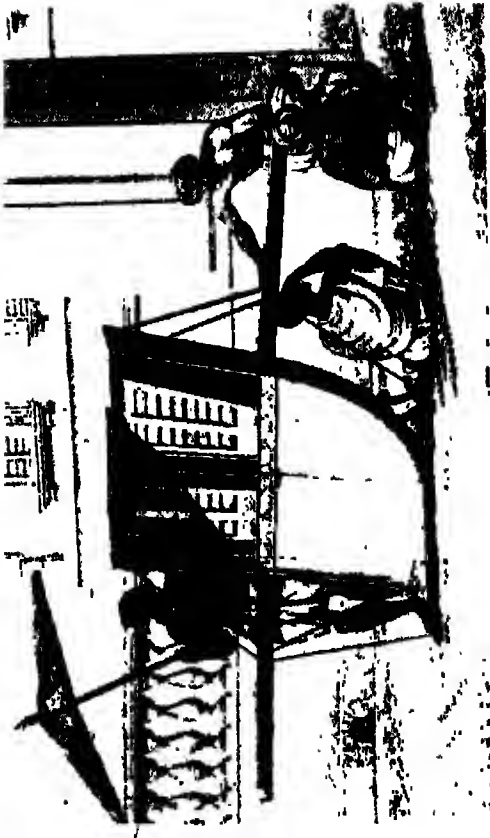
27. *Mahārāja Krisna Chandra, of Nadia by Solvyns.
(Victoria Memorial)*



28. *Gharak near Chhatu Babu's house, 1790 by Solvyns. (note the Chinese)*
(Victoria Memorial)



29. *Kalighat temple, 1790 by Solvyns. (Victoria Memorial)*



30. Chaise Palanquine, Calcutta 1790. (*Victoria Memorial*)

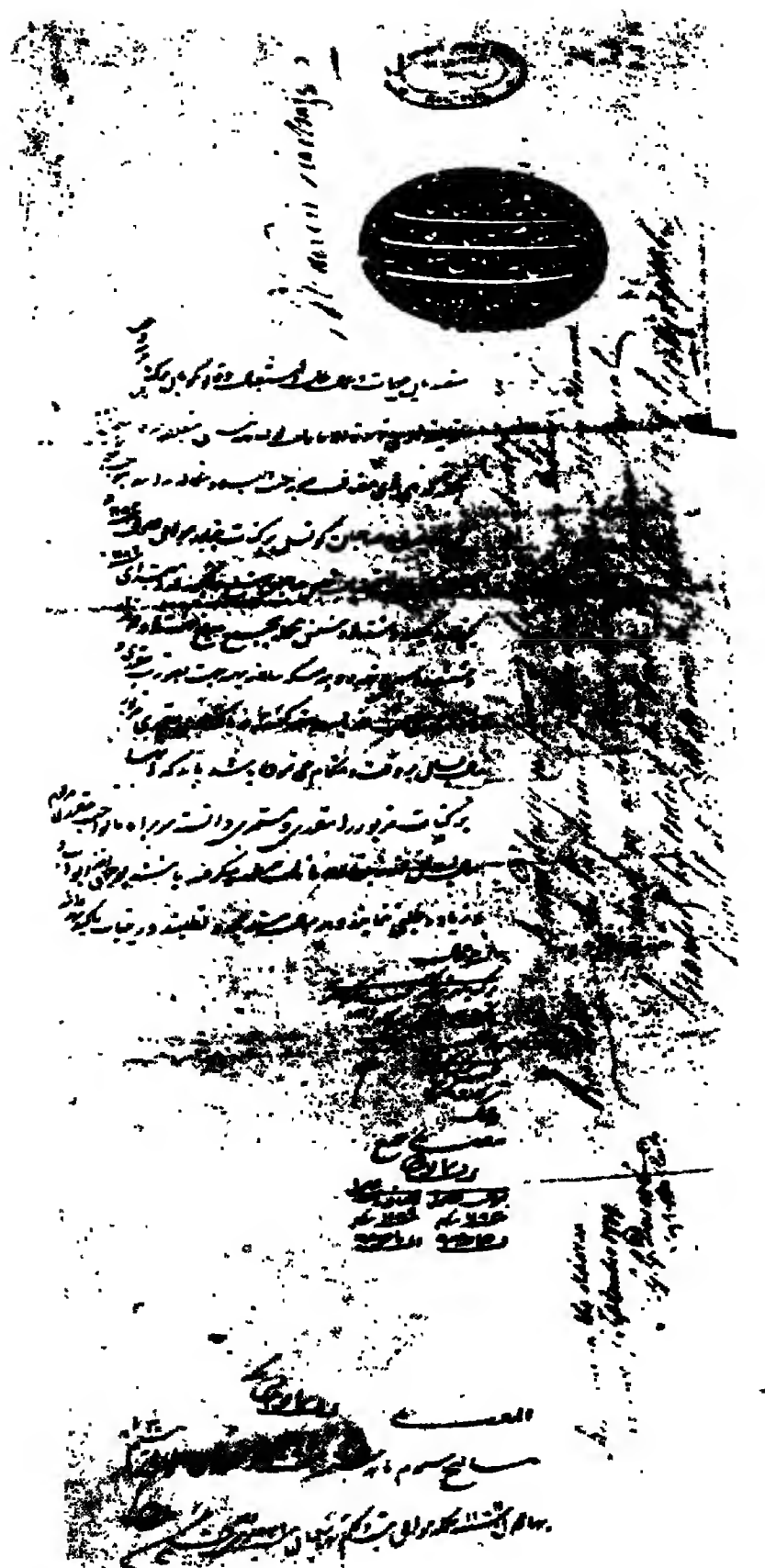


31. Palanquin, Calcutta 1790. (*Victoria Memorial*)



32. Meanah (note their use in Bijaygarh.) (*V.M.*)

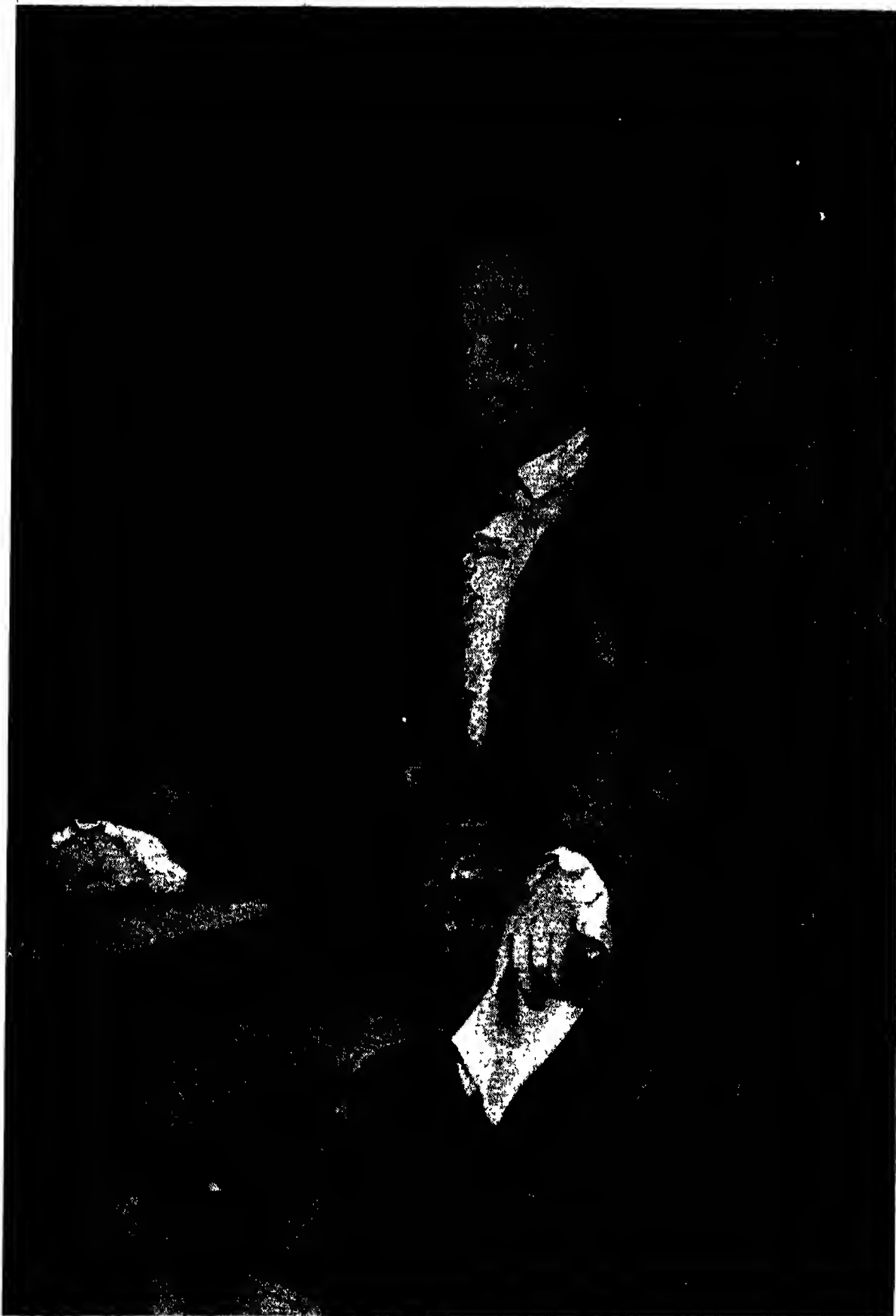




34. A copy of the Baharbund Sanad dated
3rd September 1779.



36a. Warren Hastings, engraving, by Thomas Watson, from a painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1774.



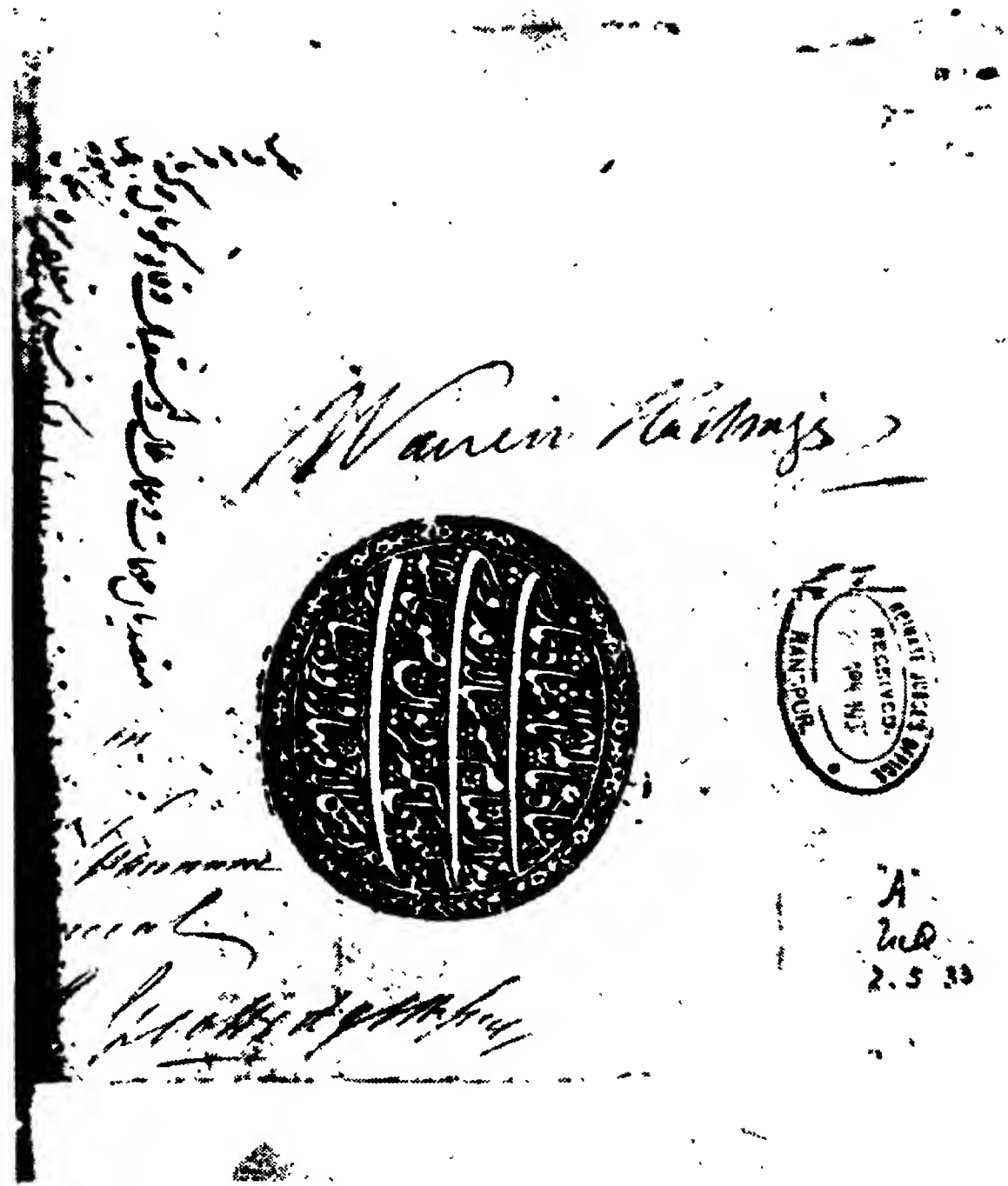
36 b. *Warren Hastings, engraving, by John Jones, from a painting by J. T. Seton, 1784.*

Handwritten ledger entries in Devanagari script, organized in columns. The text includes various numerical figures and descriptive entries, typical of an account book. Some entries are underlined or circled.

Handwritten ledger entries in Devanagari script, organized in columns. The text includes various numerical figures and descriptive entries, typical of an account book. Some entries are underlined or circled.

Handwritten ledger entries in Devanagari script, organized in columns. The text includes various numerical figures and descriptive entries, typical of an account book. Some entries are underlined or circled.

37. Pages from Cantoo Baboo's books of accounts.



38. Warren-Hastings signature in the Baharbund Pargana Sanad.

